**EXCERPTS FROM GAC WORKING METHODS PROPOSAL FOR THE GNSO-GAC EARLY ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP**

**On-going interaction with private sector stakeholders:**

1. *Reverse GAC liaisons:*

ACs and SOs can be requested to appoint a representative to attend GAC meetings, report back to their constituencies and provide their input to the GAC preliminary thinking. The GAC should consider which ACs and SOs should be invited to appoint a liaison to the GAC but the appointment of GNSO and the ccNSO liaisons seems to be essential. Reverse liaisons could also explain to the GAC in detail how its advice has been implemented and any difficulties that may have arisen in its enforcement.

USA suggest initiating a trial period for this function. It would consist at the outset of providing information updates as to the priority work items for other SOs and ACs, which would help the GAC identify its own priorities for work. The concept/function needs to involve information sharing by all parties.

This reverse liaison mechanism would complement the Early Engagement scheme which is close to being put into operation. The latter procedure looks apt for situations in which the GNSO itself starts a Policy Development Process (PDP), but may not be so useful when the GAC raises an issue through its normal processes which is then presented to the community through its Communiqué. In these instances, the reverse liaison solution might work out better.

1. *Fine-tuning GAC Early Engagement:*

In relation to the GAC Early Engagement in GNSO Policy Development Process, GAC members would appreciate if the GAC Secretariat, who is the recipient of notices of new developments in a PDP, prepared each time a brief note to the GAC summarizing the main new elements since the previous notice, and advising the GAC of public policy issues that deserve attention.

Early Engagement documents are available at the GAC website in different languages **and the GAC is advised of these postings through its mailing list.** The latest post is an October update from the GNSO PDPs. At the bottom of the page, there´s a link to the monthly policy updates provided by ICANN. As this information can be hard to follow and assess for GAC members, the Secretariat could scan these notices to find issues revealing public policy interests and prepare a brief note to grab the attention of the GAC to them.

1. *Publicity of meetings:*

We propose to decide on publicity of meetings according to the following guidelines:

* Plenary sessions: they should be open, except for the following situations:
  1. Discussion on internal matters, unless they refer to communication with other constituencies in ICANN.
  2. Drafting of the GAC Communiqué. The WG on working methods has earlier suggested allocating some time every day to review portions of the Communiqué that may have been already written down.
  3. Discussion of issues on which the GAC is to provide its advice whenever they are highly contentious or sensitive for some of the GAC members affected.

The exceptions serve the purpose of granting GAC members a trust-worthy atmosphere in which to have an open debate.

* “On the spot” working group meetings: they should be closed since they are convened to try to find an agreeable solution for the GAC members most affected. Besides, the small size of these working groups does not allow for observers to join in.

However, the GAC may decide that the working group could/should consult with other ACs or SOs representatives in order to clear doubts or shed light on the issue in hand. To this end, the working group can meet with ACs or SOs representatives.

* Conference calls: they should be closed since they are intended, most of the time, to prepare GAC meetings and are hardly relevant for decision making within the GAC. Nevertheless, the Chair of the GAC or the person leading the conference call may invite other ACs or SOs representatives, ICANN Board members or ICANN personnel to take part in the conference call if it is deemed useful.
* Enforcement of these guidelines if reverse GAC liaisons are appointed: they could attend all GAC plenaries, open or closed, including conference calls, except for the ones that are not related to the remit of their groups or deal only with GAC internal matters.

We regard the role of reverse GAC liaison as different from a mere observer to GAC sessions. They should provide input to the GAC by conveying the position or positions in their group about the issue in hand, answering questions from GAC members and anticipating possible reactions by their group, apart from informing their constituencies about GAC deliberations.

The role of AC or SO representative in helping the “On the spot” GAC working groups can be fulfilled by the reverse GAC liaisons, if the committee or organization whose advice is sought assigns him or her to this task. Likewise, if an AC or SO is invited to join a GAC conference call, the AC or SO may designate the reverse GAC liaison as its representative in the call.

The reverse GAC liaisons are expected to have good sense and treat the information gathered at GAC closed meetings carefully, a standard which is also expected from the very AC or SO (they could not disclose data, conversation, draft papers or interventions to people outside their constituency). The GAC may request their constituencies to appoint someone else in case of strong suspicion of behaviour contrary to this standard, or discontinue this kind of relationship with the AC or SO.

* Public attending to GAC meetings are not allowed to take the floor, except for joint sessions with other constituencies, when members of these communities could be given the floor. On the contrary, reverse GAC liaisons could request the floor to speak during all GAC meetings in which they participate.
* ICANN Board members and ICANN Staff attendance to GAC meetings: only the GAC liaison (Olof Nordling) and ICANN Staff supporting the GAC Secretariat can attend all meetings.
* GAC mailing list and private section of the GAC website: only for GAC members, GAC Secretariat and ICANN Staff assigned to supporting GAC Secretariat.