
MICHELLE DESMYTER:

Welcome everyone. Good morning, good afternoon and good evening. Welcome to the AFRALO webinar on Universal Acceptance and IDNs on Thursday, the 19th of December, 2019. On today's call we have on the English Channel, Vernatius Okwu Ezeama, Tijani Ben Jemaa, Pastor Peters Omoragbon, Yazid Akanho, Esther Patricia Akello, Sarata Omane, Bill Jouris, Abdalmonem Tharwat Galila, Ben Kyemba, Baraack Otieno, Abdel Gaffar Ouro-Agoro, Remmy Nweke, Seun Ojedeji, Michel Tchonang, Mohamed, Moses Serugo, Sarah Kiden, Isaac Maposa, Dave Kissoondoyal, Bukola Odontoid.

On the French Channel we do have Minata Zong-Naba, Aicha Abbaad. We do have apologies from Adri Baard. From Staff we do have Heidi Ullrich, Silvia Vivanco, Claudia Ruiz and myself, Michelle DeSmyter, on call management. Our interpreters today are Camila and Isabelle.

Before we begin, I would like to have a friendly reminder to everyone to please state your name before speaking and please speak clearly for transcription purposes and also so the interpreters can identify on the language channels. Please also keep your phones and microphones on mute when not speaking to avoid any background noise. Thank you ever so much and I will turn the meeting back over to Seun Ojedeji, please begin.

SUEN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very and hello everyone, welcome. Thank you everyone for making today to attend this call, this is a festive period and thanks to staff and the interpreters as well for making these resources required for

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this meeting. Without taking too much time, I would just like to once again welcome you all this webinar. This webinar is to give us the opportunity to fully understand or better introduce or level of awareness on this topic, IDNs and also universal acceptance.

We have a list of speakers who are going to be providing us updates, who are going to be also informing us about these very important topics. It is important for us because we are Africa, we have a very diverse community, lots of languages which actually is all naturally applicable in terms of IDNs and the follow up with the UA, Universal Acceptance. It is a very important topic for us and I would recognize the speakers, which is William Jouris who will speak to us about the IDN. William is the CEO of Inside [inaudible] and is also a member of NARALO as an individual member; I hope I got that correctly.

Then we also have two members from our region, from AFRALO, I believe both of them are also Universal Acceptance Ambassadors. Recently we got the news for Yazid Akanho who was also included on that list. We also have Adbalmonem Galila who is the deputy manager of IDN ccTLD of Egypt. Both Yazid who is from Benin, a technical engineer from Benin, they are both part of AFRALO. On this note, I would give the floor to William. William, over to you.

MICHELLE DESMYTER:

We are ready for your presentation, if you could go ahead and unmute your line at this time by pressing star six. Bill, we are ready for your presentation.

BILL JOURIS: We working now?

MICHELLE DESMYTER: We are working, please go ahead.

BILL JOURIS: Thank you all very much for inviting. I'm going to be talking today about the Internationalization of Domain Names Effort and specifically, the part of the effort that involves the Latin script. I've been working on this for the past three years. The basic idea is to expand the internet infrastructure beyond English and so this will be a little glimpse of what we're been doing.

In the beginning of the internet there were just 26 letters, as used in English that we used for domain names and conflicts were simply names that were the same. Now that we're expanding into multiple languages, we have multiple character sets. There are lots more characters, there are lots more conflicts between characters but the same principles still apply. You have to use a symbol that is valid in some language and you can't use something that conflicts with something that somebody else has already registered. It sounds very straightforward, it's not.

The project is expanding our repertoire. Some of the scripts are probably familiar to you because they're either used by large numbers of people or by major economic countries or just by historically significant languages. There are a bunch of other scripts which are the official language in some country or some province but even if you've

never heard of them, let alone seen them, somebody still has to deal with them, so it's a huge undertaking.

Some languages and scripts are pretty well constrained, for instance the Armenian script is only used by the Armenian language, so it's pretty simple, you go to a grammar school text book teaching children to read and you have an alphabet and you're all set. But thanks to centuries for Christian Missionaries, the Latin alphabet is used by dozens and dozens of languages on every continent. The largest number are in Europe and in Africa but there are a fair number in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands and even a handful of native languages in South America. Still the same basic letters but with variations.

The first obvious question is, which languages did we look at? We ended up with two criteria. First off are official languages. If the language is the official language of a nation or of a state, province or region within a country, it got included. Official language meaning the government does business in it, accepts documents using it and provides documents itself which use it. The other criteria was large populations. If a language isn't an official language but is the native language spoken by over one million people, it also does include.

The one million figure is entirely arbitrary, so if you know of a language that you think we should have considered but it only has 800,000 speakers, feel free in the comment period to put in a comment on the document we're producing and tell us we missed something important. Note however, that languages are only important as part of the process for selecting a repertoire, that is which symbols can be used for domain

names. If we missed a language but all of the symbols used in it are already in the repertoire, it's not really a critical oversight.

The next problem was, is that unlike most scripts, Latin has lots of different fonts. I've shown here the three different fonts that we've used for most of your work, it's only a small subset but we'd hoped it would at least help us when we came to considering variance. Part of the problem with fonts is, sometimes the letters look very different, the letter A can be written either of the two forms shown here.

Most people who use a Latin language will recognize both of them instantly and have no problem with it. Letter G however, gets to be a little trickier. The two forms not only aren't the same but suppose you have a top level domain name of .QOV, you can't pretty easily from a principle TLD of QOV until you underline it and as we're probably aware, most webpages and most word processing software automatically underline the domain name. As you can see there, it's a little tricky to tell the difference and we'll get back to that.

The Latin alphabet as I say, starts with 26 letters but it also uses a large number of diacritics, which are shown here. In some cases, especially Vietnamese and soabah, a letter can have more than one diacritic. For visibility here, I've put the diacritics in red and also made them rather larger than the type used on the rest. As you can see, even made large like this, some of them still a little hard to tell apart.

Any given language only uses a few diacritics. English doesn't use any at all. Spanish uses three or four, French has a few more. The problem we have is, how well can you tell the difference between two diacritics if

you don't even know that one exists? For instance, if you have an N with a macron and an N with atilida and you've never seen a macron, can you tell the difference between those two?

If you have an E with a dot above and an E with a grave accent and you've never encountered a dot above, can you tell the difference? Most people will know the diacritics for the own language, they probably or are at least familiar with seeing one or two other languages but that still leaves probably half of the diacritics that they've never heard of.

Just for a glimmer of how bad it can be, the letter O with various diacritics has 30 different variations. Some of these are pretty easy to tell apart. The basic letter O in the upper left verses the last item in the third line has a circumflex and atilida, you probably would notice that there's all that stuff above the second case. But some of them are pretty similar to each other, especially when you're dealing with the normal sized font.

The way we deal with that is variance. The basic principle is, what you see is what you get but it only works if what you see is what you think you see. What we all want as a user is, when you click on a link you want to go where you expected to go. As a registrant, you have a domain for your website for your customers and users, you want them to reliably come to your site and not go somewhere else.

We have three different levels. We have variance, we have confusable's and we letters that are just different. The reason you care is that for top level domains, which are the focus of our work, you may not care but if

something is really confusable, you may find someone has registered the domain, that top level domain and so you get a domain name that looks just the one you expected but that subtle little difference there, maybe 20, 30 percent of the population will look at and go, "Oh yes, I see the difference."

And everybody else will go, "Those are different?" The criteria for variance are stricter so something under five percent of the population will notice the difference. What happens is, if you are trying to register a new TLD and it only differs from an existing one by variant, that's going to bounce automatically.

Then, the proposed top-level domain name will get looked at by a similarity review panel, which will look for confusable's and decide whether it's different enough that you can in fact register that domain name. Note that this is all for top level domain names. Second level domain names are a whole different story and we'll get to those later on.

This is sort of my idea of joke except it isn't. Look at this domain name. Did you notice that the K is isn't just a K? Did you notice that the J isn't actually a J at all? The K is actually a K with a horn which is unique to Hossa. Maybe a couple of people on this call are actually familiar with Hossa and will know this but most of us won't. As for what looks like a J, it's actually a letter I with a diacritic called [inaudible] and that only occurs in Lithuania and I will be amazed if there's anybody here who knows Lithuanian. The point is, it's hard to see things if you never knew they existed.

Now, if you make the domain name bigger and you put it side by side with what you think you're going to, yes you can probably see the difference except that when you're clicking on a link, you typically don't have the luxury of a side by side comparison and I don't know about you but I never bother to expand the font size to anything like centimeter high, which is what it takes to be liable able to tell the difference between some of these characters.

This is the sort of the thing that you can see. The criteria we got from the integration panel, which is the next level up from the Latin Generation Pane is, the reasonably careful user, if the reasonably careful user will spot the difference, then it's not a variant. If it can't tell the difference, then it is a variant. These are the sorts of things you can see, you can it's a continuum and where the threshold is, is somewhat arbitrary.

I don't think we need to go through all of these. I would note in the case of the second one, most of us in ICANN are aware that domain names are all lowercase. However, outside, everybody has a couple of decades of experience that tells that uppercase and lowercase are totally interchangeable and so you have situations like this where the Cyrillic entry, the third letter is easily distinguishable from the M in .COM when you have the .COM in lowercase, when you have it in uppercase, it's a little harder to tell the difference.

We have first off, cross script variance. The first group are with the Latin alphabet compare to the Greek and Armenian. These languages are related, they all descend from all Phoenician and that commence means there are a large number of cross script variance. Armenian has the

fewest but there are still a bunch of them. If you aren't aware of them, you'll be looking at one thing and think you're seeing something else.

In addition, there are some symbols that are just so generic that they occur in lots of totally unrelated languages. In simple vertical bar, a circle, a crescent, so we have cross script variance to languages that are totally unrelated to each other.

Finally, we have in script variance. The first case is the only case in the Latin repertoire where the two symbols are exactly the same. Pixel for pixel identical. The other ones are still something of a challenge to tell apart. We have gone through and tried to make reasonable decisions about where the thresholds ought to be, sometimes we got it right, sometimes it's a challenge because you just don't realize, as with the K with horn, that there's something meaningful to see.

We also have another problem. As I mentioned, domain names are routinely underlined. If your diacritic is below the line, the underlining can totally obscure it. With the dot below, the dot is totally covered. In some cases, it's only mostly covered. If you look closely at the fourth example, you can see a couple of pixels where the comma below extends outside of the line. Likewise, with the L in the next one.

In both of those cases, the Latin Generation Panel decided that's just too tiny and nobody can tell the difference. At the moment, we've received feedback from the Integration Panel saying, "No, we think those are probably different enough they shouldn't be variant." It remains to be seen how that will come out. That's the level of difference that we're [inaudible]. Next slide please.

This is the same slide except with the underlining removed, just to make it a little simpler to see what we were talking about in that underlining case.

Part of the reason I'm here is because we need help. Our problem is that we all know too much. After three years, even those of us who are not trained linguists, know all 20 diacritics, we know what they look like, we know what the differences are, we sensitive to them and what we're going to need during the review period is for people who are not that familiar to give us some input on which differences can you see, which differences can you not see and in general, do you think we got thresholds wrong and we ought to change them? Our current guess is our report will go up for public comment in the early spring, probably sometime near March and we really, really need your comments on that.

Then there are the things that we're not dealing with. The variance we find are strictly applied to the top-level domain names. For second level domain names, what is considered variant is entirely up to the individual registry. They can decide there are variance, they can decide they don't care, it's all entirely up to them. The problem is, that there are serious economic incentives for them to say, "No, there are no variance." That way they can sell defensive registrations. How big a problem is that?

Let take just three letters. The letter T, there are, including the base letter, three letters that are variant of each other plus a couple more that are confusable. For C there is the C with the Cydia and possibly, the C with dot above. For the letter I there are eight variants and by the

time you get to confusable's you're up to 14 letters. So, what does that do for you?

Let's take a sample domain name. This is the domain name for City Bank, I'm not picking on them particularly, I've never worked, I don't know anyone who works there but they have a nice short domain name. Here are two or three examples just using variance for the second level domain name. Can you see the difference? Maybe.

Just using the variant, you can come up with 48 different domain names. By the time you add in all the confusable's, you can get up to 300 domain names. That's a whole lot of possible revenue for the registry. The users are kind of stuck. You can either buy the various variations on your name or you can wait until some bad actor comes along, buys one of the variations and goes out and starts defrauding your customers.

In the past, when there have been problems like this, the bad actors had to go out and figure out for themselves, what was going to be an easy confusion. But good luck for them, when we publish this document, they will have, from ICANN, a published list of what variations will confuse users. Making bad actors lives easier.

The problem with confusing domain names isn't a new problem, there's a report here that you can read on what has happened. I'm offering this one particular example. There's a transportation company called Easy Jet and a year or so ago somebody registered a domain name of Easy IET as opposed to JET and proceeded to defraud a whole bunch of Easy Jet customers. The only way they finally got rid of it was to cancel the

registration of the domain name being used for fraud. So, there's an issue there.

What can you do about that? Well, the first thing is to point out to the company that you work for, "You know, we really ought to get involved in ICANN because it's our customers that can get led astray and if we're not showing up for meetings, then we only get whatever decisions are made by people who do show up." The registries all show up. The number of companies who show up is a tiny fraction of all of the companies there are.

The second thing you can do is, lobby what happens with second level domain names. The contracts with the registries may seem like a very obscure topic but those contracts could be revised to tell registries, "Okay, we found all these variants, you can't register a domain name if there's already an existing one that only differs by one or more variants." The final thing you can do is, talk to your bank or your stock broker if you have one. Financial institutions are the ones most likely to get hit by some kind of fraud over things like this and as a matter of self-defense, they may want to get involved with ICANN too.

As I mentioned, the document we're producing is coming up for public comment next spring. We really need your help on this. A couple of things in particular. One of the appendices to the report is a list of pairs of code points that we thought were not variance but were merely confusable and I would hope you all would go look through those and if you see something where your reaction is, "I can't see the difference." Give us a comment, tell us you think we got it wrong, it should have been a variant. One other point, if you find several of those, put each

one in a separate comment or if you have something else where you think there's an issue, every issue you have, put it in a separate comment.

The reason for that is, if you put several issues in one comment, we have to respond to every comment but if you've got several issues, we can respond to one of them, ignore the rest and you'll get no response. Put each one in a separate comment when you write them. I will try to contact the AFRALO chair when this actually goes for public comment so that they can put an email out to everybody, that it's time to go look and comment.

That's it for me. If there are any questions, I'll be glad to try and address them.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thanks a lot, Bill. Thanks for this wonderful presentation, lots of content, lots of information, lots of education there. I was thinking you should kindly put a reminder in your notes to let us know when the public comment comes up [inaudible]. This is very [inaudible], AFRALO. We'd be really interested in doing comments when the time comes. The floor is open, any comments, questions from the colleagues, members in the room? Not seeing any hands up yet. Yes, Galila, I see your hand up, you have the floor.

ABDALMONEM THARWAT GALILA: Thank you, William, thank you Seun. I hope the document that will be published for public comment in the spring, I hope this document

handles also the issues related to right to left languages. I mean Arabic specific, as there maybe three countries here in Africa. Africa speak Arabic. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Bill, do you want to take that before we go to the next.

BILL JOURIS:

Sure. The issue of right to left verses left to right languages is getting dealt with by the particular generation panel of the languages that are written right to left. I believe the Arabic generation panel put that in their document. Our document only deals with the Latin alphabet and best of my knowledge, all of those are done from left to right. If you know of a case with the Latin alphabet that goes right to left, by all means, write and let us know but none of us at least are aware of that. Thank you.

ABDALMONEM THARWAT GALILA: You are completely right. I also am a member of that Arabic International Domain Name but the main goal behind what I said is, I don't want to mix between the language that is right to left direction and the left to right direction within the same. It will make a lot of confusability. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you. I see the next hand up. Liz, please.

LIZ OREMBO: Thank you, Seun. Thank you for this presentation. Mine is just a clarification. I'm just seeking a clarification on which way would you recommend because I see that the variant for the domain names are very important for diversification of IDNs or domain names but at the same time you also present that the chances of cyber security are also high, where do we seek the balance on this variation and the content verses cyber security?

BILL JOURIS: That's an issue that nobody to my knowledge come up with a definitive answer. We have tried as best we may to make sure that at least all of the symbols are in the repertory so that they can be used and the purpose of the variance process is to try and figure what will confuse people significantly. But where the threshold should be between those desired outcomes, I don't know that anybody has a good answer. We to a large degree are making it up as we go along. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thank you, Bill. Thanks a lot. I think we also have a question from the chat. I'm going to read it but Bill if you can look at it as well, I think you could just respond it via audio. For the transcript record let me read it. The variations are really confusing but already business for registries who understand we begin to engage with registries because it's most involved with education.

I think this partially perhaps is also to AFRALO but also to Bill. I think there's probably going to be a need for more engagement with your group. There's a lot of education that needs to be done. Of course, this will be nice. Just to ask Bill, is there any other follow up webinars, apart from the one we have just had for AFRALO, is there another follow up one that you've planned or hope to have in near future?

BILL JOURIS:

We're not currently planning any. In fact, I should have mentioned, this is not in fact a formal presentation from the Latin Generation Panel, this is just me as an individual thinking that more people should be aware of this because at least in my experience, things go up for public comment and nobody notices that they're even there and my hope was that by this presentation to AFRALO and the one that I did earlier in the week for the Latin American group, that more people would actually look.

As for the part about, how to engage with the registries? That's going to have to go probably to something up near the level unfortunately of the Board of Directors. There is a stakeholder group for the registries or as they're referred to mostly the Contracted Parties. It may be possible to go to some of their sessions at ICANN meetings and make presentations to them but I don't know whether they're -- I haven't been to their sessions so I'm not sure how open they are to someone from the floor getting up and saying, "I think you have a problem that you need to address." I'm sorry I don't have a better answer for you. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Alright, it's good to hear that you've done this presentation twice. I believe that the recording of the one you did for Latin America is also online. I think that it is probably not be in English but of course if it is in English or in some language some African countries are familiar with, please guys check the LACRALO page and if staff have the URL you could also share it in the chatroom. I see Abdulkarim your hand is up; you have the floor.

ABDULKARIM OLOYEDE: Thank you very much. I also want to thank you for this wonderful presentation. I was late to this meeting, so I wanted to find out if it is possible for you to share the slides with us? That was the first thing I wanted to aske. The second one is, what are the challenges of Universal Acceptance, especially in relation to ICANN?

Because I'm still struggling to understand, not what the group is doing, trying to get software developers and website designers to accept all the languages in relation to the role of ICANN, that's what I am still struggling with. I think if ICANN itself understand the importance of Universal Acceptance, it should be a problem for the TLDs. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Abdulkarim's question is to you, I don't know if he wants to say anything about. Abdulkarim, was just talking about the IDNs even though it's [inaudible], but if Bill wants to say something about that question, please you have the floor. I guess Bill is fine. At this point, I think we will move on to the next item on the agenda.

MICHELLE DESMYTER: We're not able to hear you. We can hear you now.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yes. Could we get full screen please? Good morning, good afternoon, good evening everybody. I am Abdalmonem Galila, I am working for the Telecom Regulatory Authority of Egypt as the deputy manager of .masr IDN ccTLD, also I am an Universal Acceptance Ambassador, mainly for Africa with my colleague Yazid and for the Middle East. Today my presentation will be mainly of course for Universal Acceptance; at the same time, Universal Acceptance doesn't [inaudible] only about IDNs. I will talk a lot about this.

My agenda for today will start by the introduction around what is universal acceptance, what universal acceptance cares about, what about universal acceptance initiative vision mission, universal issues and how to make your application to be universal acceptance ready, who cares about the issues related to universal acceptance, it is a community initiative supported by ICANN called Universal Acceptance Steering Group.

I will talk about the structure of this steering group, the action plan for the fiscal year 2020 and the stakeholders who are then main actors for Universal Acceptance and the monitoring for this and using the worker groups. Finally, I will go over how could you as an AFRALO member, help to further promote the concept of Universal Acceptance. At the end, I will open the floor for questions and I will answer.

The first point of Universal Acceptance is a basic practice that ensures that all domain names should be treated equally; they could be accepted, validated, stored versus displayed by all internet enabled applications via this end system and you say see that Universal Acceptance is key to achieving a truly inclusive and multi lingual internet.

What are the topics related to Universal Acceptance? There are three main topics. The first topic will be about the new generic top-level domain names. All of you know that the landscape of new generic top-level domains has changed remarkably since 2009 and now we have more than 1300 new generic top-level domain names.

For example we have new top-level domain names like example.web, longer top-level domain names like .AFRICA, not only in ASCII but also for IDNs. This is the first topic, new generic top-level domain names, the second topic is internationalize domain names. The domain name is in Arabic but there are some problems related to Arabic and the words that have at least one character that is Unicode.

For example, for displaying, it will be displayed in the browser, like XN--. What is this XN--? It is said to be ASCII compatible encoding. By default, DNS can't understand any [inaudible] UNICODE, how to make DNS only understand English to understand other Unicode letters, there is some algorithms [inaudible] for this Unicode and they make it understood by the DNS, which called ASCII [inaudible] encoding or CI, and there are some problems related to the context, right to left context and left to right context. For example, for Arabic language domain names. The same topic about Universal Acceptance, who cares about Email Address

Internalization. I meant by Email Address Internalization that you will have your email address in your own local language. For me for example, I have an email address in Arabic; for the German people, there is an email address in Dutch, like Günte@Bücher.berlin.

Of course, all the systems that exist online now were developed 20 years ago using old [inaudible] couldn't handle the new generic top-level domain names that may be in ASCII or may be IDNs, couldn't handle internationalized domain names correctly. Couldn't handle Email Address Internalization correctly. If you wanted to check if your email server is able to handle the Email Address Internalization addresses or not, you could go for <https://uasg.tech/eai-check> and check if your email server supports EAI or not. Next slide please.

One of the issues, I will not have all of the issues related to Universal Acceptance but for example I will go for social media, for Facebook for example. I couldn't sign up for a new Facebook account using my ASCII email address that has a new new generic top-level domain name, .global. At the same time, if I go to Facebook and I want to sign up with my EAI address, Arabic email address, it will reject, it's not understood by the interface of Facebook.

If at the same time I go to Twitter and I'm going to sign up using my EAI address, my Arabic address, it will say invalid email. That means that the developer who makes this interface using some kind of validation that only validates the last label to be two or three letters only and there's [inaudible] other, that is the problem. You can't write over the browser and write for example, Arabic domain name and then copy this word

from the browser and open [inaudible] and this word will translated to XN--. It will be a problem, it is confusability. Next slide please.

The vision of Universal Acceptance initiative is that all domain names, all email addresses work in all software applications. The mission you have is all email addresses, all domain names should be treated equally, stored, accepted, validated, processed correctly. What is the impact of Universal Acceptance? You will promote consumer choice. You will have a large base for new customers abroad.

Maybe I have an interface, for example, Alibaba will handle the people who can't write English; at same time we will handle the people who are looking to see the branding of the company, for example, I want to have a domain name, an email address Abdalmonem@marketing.Dubai in English. I wanted [inaudible] for my branding, how could I do this? How could the interface handle this? Who cares about all of these issues related to Universal Acceptance?

Is your business reaching the people it needs to? Next slide.

The internet's standards have changed - have your applications? Of course not. To be sure about this, Facebook, Twitter, other applications may be online [inaudible] inside your country; if you try to register or sign up for a new account, it will be rejected. Next slide.

How to make your application to be UA ready? There are five verbs in order to make applications could handle the [inaudible] billion internet users, to be [inaudible] online and use their own local language for domain names, their own local language for email addresses. At the same time, other people who could write English well to preserve their

branding. In order to make all of this, your application should accept domain names, email addresses whatever the language, whatever it is usually top-level domain or not.

Your application could validate this top-level domain correctly and since it is correct, it should store this data and say to the database that it could handle Unicode data. Your application should be able to process the data. You want it to search for example for all tourist guides that are related to Asia. You will search for the top-level domain and email address for dot Asia, for example for Nigeria, dot Nigeria. For [inaudible], what you write in the browser, you should see [it after it's displayed from the database. Next slide.

UASG , it is a community initiative supported by ICANN. The main goal behind Universal Acceptance Steering Group is that all domain names, all email addresses should be treated equally through making a lot of awareness sessions, talking to a lot of software providers. Also, UASG is made of individual experts and more than 170 organizations from across the global, including Apple, Godaddy, Google, Microsoft and Verisign.

UASG is leading the promotion of Universal Acceptance by encouraging all organizations, businesses and the government to request that their suppliers and developers implement or develop Universal Acceptance Registry solutions and systems. And of course, UASG also helps developers to construct their UA ready systems by providing a lot of material, a lot of documentation that you will see if you go to UASG.tech website; by default, .tech is the new generic top-level domain name. Next slide please.

The structure of Universal Acceptance Steering Group will have the chair, Dr. Ajay Data from India and we have three vice chairs; Dennis from Verisign from different areas, Mark from Microsoft and Mr. Dusan Stojicevic based in Serbia. You could join our community to know a lot of discussion about Universal Acceptance, so go join the mailing list [inaudible].

I will now talk about stakeholders and the working group. Community stakeholders, the stakeholders will care about the technology enablers. When I am talking about technology enablers, I mean the technical community members from maybe IETF, and for example [inaudible] and Unicode [inaudible]. Also, the developers who make or invent the new programming language, the new [inaudible] or frameworks. Second, the stakeholder technology developers, those who are involved with developing products and services.

Service stakeholder, email software and service provider. I am talking here about the providers of open source or proprietary email software services and all related software to emails.

For individuals, for influencing individual and organizations. Influencing individuals, for example consultants for organizations maybe ISOC, maybe ALSes.

For government policy makers, the last stakeholder, government policy makers and the government officials, you wanted to have for example the policy adoption for Universal Acceptance readiness. How do you make this? You should start from the policy makers.

The working groups will have technology working groups related to technology enablers and technology developers. Email address internationalization worker groups are related to software and services, and how to make this email softwares to be EAI ready.

There are two phases of EAI readiness, there are phase one and phase two. Phase one, you should be able to send and receive to the EAI address and from the EAI address. Phase two, that you can create a mailbox with you own local language. I mean for example, Abdalmonem in English, I could make this in Arabic, this is a local mailbox.

For measurements working group; the main goal behind the measurements work group is the measurement has Universal Acceptance [inaudible]. To select software and say how to make this application to be UA ready, how to measure the readiness of this application.

Communications working group plans and develops communication strategy and oversee its execution in cooperation with other working groups.

Local Initiatives; I wanted to reach out the policy makers here for example, I want to reach out to policy makers; for example here I wanted to reach out to the public sector, the private sector and the email providers inside my country, I could do that through the local initiative working group as a UA ambassador to help the community of UASG to spread the work of Universal Acceptance, to make Universal Acceptance training, like what I did here in Egypt. And I started hearing Egypt for the local initiative, that will be published soon, I will start with

the [inaudible] actors of local initiative; that will be email service provider, technology enabler, policy maker for procurement and policies.

That is the summary for what I said before the stakeholders and working groups. Next slide.

AFRALO, how could you as a member of AFRALO help spread the word of Universal Acceptance?

If you want to help the Universal Acceptance Steering Group, the first thing you should identify the relevant stakeholder organization, you want to target it. By default, [inaudible] applications that are related to domain names or email addresses.

Any applications [inaudible] in order to access this application, to receive notifications, you have to sign up first, to the server, so you should identify the local stakeholder organization, maybe the stakeholder civil society, technology associations, influencing organizations or individuals, public sectors, government.

How to deliver the message to each of these stakeholders, maybe I am responsible for policy, how to draft the message. It will be different from the message that will reach to the developers. How to reach out this local stakeholder and say that there is a site called UASG.tech that has a lot of documentation and how to get the next 1 billion internet users online, to be working first one who [inaudible] in other languages. How to join UASG work groups you are interested in. Next slide.

How can AFRALO members help organize and contribute to the local initiatives of Universal Acceptance Steering Group? Me, for example,

here in Egypt I drafted the document for the local initiative, I [inaudible] the stakeholder, I am targeted. Of course, Universal Acceptance as I said, [inaudible] topics, new generic top-level domain names, IDNs and EAI. I should make them aware first by this [inaudible] topic and we'll talk to them about the issues related to Universal Acceptance. Of course, all of this for technical guys is different from the IT manager, is different from the public sector, is different from the policy guys.

How can AFRALO members help test their own policies and systems for UA readiness? You have to start by yourself in your own organization. I wanted to see if my application is EAI ready or not, is Universal Acceptance ready or not. How to check that? You have to follow the five criteria of UA readiness. Sorry for being late, next slide please.

You can join; you should join the UASG working group that you have an interest in. You can go for UASG.tech and join this work group, fill the form and be a member of this working group according to your interest. Maybe you are technical, maybe you are wanting to measure and monitor. Maybe you are looking forward for some media, you will go for the [inaudible] working group. Maybe you are a policy maker, you will go to the group that is related to policy. Next slide.

This is uasg.tech. *.* means anything.anything is valid. Before we are going to the questions, I would like to invite my colleague Yazid to share his experience in the future about what should he do inside his country for the local initiative for spreading the word of Universal Acceptance. Yazid, the floor is yours.

YAZID AKANHO:

Thank you very much, Abdalmonem. I hope that everyone can hear me. Basically, my journey with the Universal Acceptance started in March of this year, when our ISOC chapter, local ISOC chapter, Benin chapter with ICANN, we organized a workshop on Universal Acceptance. It was the first of March, 2019.

This workshop was organized towards developers and also IT managers here in Benin to talk about Universal Acceptance. Why the applications must be ready for Universal Acceptance, email address internationalization and also IDNs, what is the impact of IDNs and how our email servers mush process domain names for [inaudible].

After this workshop, that internally in ISOC chapter, I discussed with a friend of mine to look a bit deep inside this Universal Acceptance. Basically, what we did, we tried to investigate whether our email servers here in Benin were ready for EAI, email address internationalization. This is how we started. First, we try to understand what EAI is and how to check. I think one of your slides were talking about it, you talked about accept, validate, store, process and display.

Actually, what we did was just to make sure or to control whether our mail servers were ready to accept internationalized domain name addresses, so this is what we did; and for a bit more of 100 domain names, I think it was 108 or 110 domain names, .BG domain name, our ccTLD. We collected actually 100 BG domain names and for each of them, we tried to check whether the host mail servers and for those which host mail servers we tested for each of the mail servers, we tested if they are EAI compliant.

After this study, we provided a report and we submitted to [inaudible] actually, and he was really interested how we did our investigation and also he even explained to us what he did on previous years back related to IDNs, how he talked with some language specialists in Benin here, and unfortunately he also explained to us that those people were not really engaged to continue the job. He told us to really get engaged in this because it's very important.

To be honest, I was not even -- I didn't know that was your doing, it was really interesting and it was also useful. For us, we were just interested by how our local language can have a chance on the internet. How our local languages here in Africa, mostly in my country in Benin where we speak Yoruba, we speak Fon Gbe, we speak [inaudible]. When you go to Nigeria they are also many languages there, you go to Togo, you go to [inaudible] etc. I think one of the slides actually talked about more than 2000 languages in Africa.

If we want to bring more people on the internet, those who don't speak French or English or German or Spain, I think this is a key point where we must work on but unfortunately internet is not ready for that. Internet and also our applications are not ready for that. We found that it was something very important for us to work on. As technical policy makers like Abdalmonem explained also.

This is work what we did and at ICANN66 our results, we were actually shared by the GSE Africa in their reports. It was shared with all audience during one of the USG meetings at ICANN66 and after that I was approached by the director of USG, so congratulate me on what we did

and asked me why we were interested in doing that research after the workshop we received.

And yes, my answer was that it's an opportunity for us to bring local languages on the internet. We're just doing that to see at which level our mail servers are ready for that and we never know that our result will actually be shared at ICANN. After that, he suggests me to join USG to continue what we started and I applied for the ambassador program. Actually, I filled the statement of interest and my background also, my technical background, what I would like to do.

Finally, I have been selected. Looking forward, I really want to make our local languages being routed on the internet and we have to work hard to make all the systems, all the applications being ready to understand what is not active. This is a very huge task; this is very huge work. We all have to do together. We all see that there are many stakeholders and only people can talk to all of them, we have to the job all together, talking to our policy makers, talking to our students at universities, talking to our developers, talking to our chat box which are building at lot of applications to route programs, all those who are innovative on the internet producing applications to resolve issues.

That's it. I really think that within AFRALO we have all the [CROSSTALK] which has actually been growing because we are two ambassadors now and let's see what we can achieve together. Thank you very much.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Yazid and Galila. I think there was a question about the difference between the UA and IDN. The UA being the first

main thing, IDN being part of the implementation of the UA. I think Galila wants to ask something.

ABDALMONEM GALILA:

IDN, Internationalized Domain Name, it means domain name in the local languages, Arabic, Swahili, Hausa, whatever the language, or even an English letter but at least one of these English letters have one letter. For example, at least they have dialectics, that have dot above or dot down, it's considered dot IDN, Internationalized Domain Name.

Universal Acceptance are related to the issues that come from the using of IDNs, the using of email address internationalization and the usage of new generic top-level domain names; that may be with long TLDs, like .Dubai, .Istanbul, .AbuDhabi, .Africa and .web, .shop, .XYZ, this is different. IDN is just for example Google.com, it is an ASCII domain name, but if one of the [inaudible] of Google.com has dot above or dot behind, it will be considered an IDN.

This IDN has some issues with the current systems. How could we identify these issues and resolve these issues and contact the provider of this service in order to solve this issue related to IDNs? It will be Universal Acceptance issues, that's the difference. I hope you are clear now.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Alright, thank you. I hope that is clear. In summary, Universal Acceptance being a principle. The principle is Universal Acceptance and

one of the actions surrounding the principle is having internationalized domain names, which is the IDNs.

We move on to -- I think we are done with the additions and the questions. Are there any questions for that question, for Yazid and Abdalmonem? Jouris as well. Any questions on IDNs, any questions on UA, this is where we get that. We are going to be expecting follow ups from our ambassadors, that is Galila and Yazid.

Please, always reach out to us on the AFRALO mailing list and then of course, the AFRALO leadership is also available if you'd like to have any special discussions with us on any plans that you have to engage and reach the community or anything that you want us to support you on. Please reach out to us, reach out to Sarah, myself, any of us, we'd be glad to support.

We move to item seven, which is any other business. I don't see any hands up. I don't see any new comments. Any other business, going once, going twice, fine. Okay, I think I'm happy to say that I'm going to give us some time, at least I'm going to give us back at least five minutes so you can go out and prepare for Christmas and the New Year. I use this opportunity to say thank you very much for the work we've done together this year and on behalf of the AFRALO team, we wish you all for those who celebrate Christmas, Merry Christmas and to all of us, a Happy New Year in our plans. Bye for now. Thanks to interpreters, thanks to Staff as well.

CLAUDIA RUIZ:

Thanks so much everyone, happy holidays from the Staff. Bye-bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]