RESOLUTION 133 (REV. BUCHAREST, 2022)

Role of administrations of Member States in the management of internationalized (multilingual) domain names

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Bucharest, 2022)

considering

the provisions of Resolutions 101 and 102 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of this conference, with regard to international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet and the management of Internet resources, including domain names and addresses,

recalling

a)   the role of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T), as defined in resolutions adopted at the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, including, *inter alia*, Resolution 47 (Rev. Dubai, 2012), on country code top-level domain names, and Resolution 48 (Rev. Geneva, 2022), on internationalized (multilingual) domain names;

b)   the role of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, as defined in the resolutions adopted by the World Telecommunication Development Conference, especially Resolution 82 (Rev. Kigali, 2022), on preserving and promoting multilingualism on the Internet for an inclusive information society;

c)   United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 70/125, on the outcome document of the UNGA high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS);

d)   UNGA Resolution 70/1, on transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

e)   the commitment of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by WSIS to advance the process for the introduction of multilingualism in a number of areas, including domain names, e-mail, Internet addresses, information and communication technology (ICT) applications and keyword look-up;

f)   the need to continue the regional expansion of the Domain Name System (DNS) root server instances in order to increase DNS resilience, and to promote the use of internationalized domain names (IDNs) to overcome linguistic barriers and increase the accessibility of the Internet;

g)   past successful standardization activities undertaken by ITU-T with regard to the adoption of recommendations pertaining to non-Latin character sets for telex (five-character code) and data transfer (seven-character code), allowing the use of non-Latin character sets for national and regional telex and for data transfer at the global, regional and international levels,

aware

a)   of the continuing progress towards integration of telecommunications and the Internet, particularly to increase accessibility;

b)   that Internet users are generally more comfortable reading or browsing through texts in their own language and that, for the Internet to become more widely available to a large number of users and to increase the benefits for societies, it is necessary to make the Internet (DNS) available in non-Latin based scripts, taking into account the progress recently made in this regard;

c)   that a multilingual Internet can help build digital skills and literacy;

d)   that a majority of people who are yet to be connected live in developing countries[1];

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[1]   These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

e)   that, recalling the results of WSIS and relevant resolutions of plenipotentiary conferences, there should be a continuing commitment to working earnestly towards multilingualization of the Internet, as part of the multilateral, transparent, democratic and multistakeholder process, involving governments and all other stakeholders, in their respective roles in implementation of this resolution;

f)   of the progress made by all stakeholders, in particular through relevant organizations and entities, in the introduction of IDNs;

g)   of the significant progress made towards the provision of IDNs and the benefits of using non-Latin character sets available on the Internet;

h)   of the progress made in providing multilingualism on the Internet, while recognizing that there are difficulties in some scripts to implement appropriate and language-specific requirements, including variants;

i)   of the need to address challenges associated with the use of visually similar characters from different languages or character sets,

emphasizing

a)   that the DNS has made progress in reflecting the diverse and growing language needs of all users, while recognizing that more remains to be done;

b)   that IDNs, and more generally ICTs and the Internet, must be widely accessible to all citizens without regard to gender, race, religion, age, disability, country of residence or language;

c)   that IDNs promote greater Internet use by all, including women and children, when in their local language;

d)   that Internet domain names should not privilege any country or region of the world to the detriment of others, and should take into account the global diversity of languages while allowing for global access;

e)   that IDNs contribute to sustainable development through the promotion of greater Internet accessibility and use in local languages;

f)   the role of ITU to assist its membership in promoting the use of their language scripts for domain names;

g)   the need to continue to implement technical solutions to enhance the implementation of IDNs;

h)   that, recalling the results of WSIS and the needs of linguistic groups, there is an urgent need to:

•   further advance the process for the introduction of multilingualism in a number of areas, including domain names, e-mail addresses and keyword look-up;

•   continue implementing programmes that allow for the presence of multilingual domain names and content on the Internet and the use of various software models in order to fight against the linguistic digital divide and to ensure that everyone can participate in the emerging new society;

•   further strengthen cooperation between relevant bodies for the further development of technical standards and to foster their global deployment,

recognizing

a)   the existing role and sovereignty of ITU Member States with respect to allocation and management of their country code numbering resources as enshrined in Recommendation ITU-T E.164;

b)   that there are a number of challenges with regard to intellectual property and the deployment of IDNs, and adequate solutions should be explored;

c)   the role played by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) with regard to dispute resolution for domain names;

d)   the role played by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with regard to promoting cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content;

e)   that ITU enjoys close cooperation with both WIPO and UNESCO;

f)   the role played by governments, technical communities and other stakeholders in advancing multilingualism, including the introduction of internationalized domain names;

g)   the importance of community engagement and information-sharing to get a better understanding of existing challenges and to support solutions, particularly in developing countries;

h)   that it is paramount to maintain global interoperability as domain names expand to include additional non-Latin character sets,

noting

the need for consistent and continuous reporting to the ITU Council on IDNs, given ITU's membership in the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN),

resolves

to explore ways and means, in accordance with the Tunis Agenda, for greater reciprocal collaboration and coordination between ITU and relevant organizations[2] involved in the development of Internet Protocol (IP)-based networks and the future Internet in the context of emerging telecommunications/ICTs, through cooperation agreements, as appropriate, in order to increase the role of ITU in Internet governance, and to promote greater participation by Member States in Internet governance so as to ensure maximum benefits to the global community and promote affordable international connectivity,

instructs the Secretary-General and the Directors of the Bureaux

1   to play an active part in all international discussions, initiatives and activities on the deployment and management of IDNs, in cooperation with relevant organizations, including WIPO and UNESCO;

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[2]   Including, but not limited to, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the regional Internet registries (RIRs), the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the Internet Society (ISOC) and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), on the basis of reciprocity.

2   to take any necessary action to ensure the sovereignty of ITU Member States with regard to Recommendation ITU-T E.164 numbering plans whatever the application in which they are used;

3   to explore ways and means for greater collaboration and coordination between ITU and relevant organizations involved in the deployment of IP-based networks;

4   to encourage the ITU members, as appropriate, to develop and deploy the IDNs in their respective language scripts using their specific character sets;

5   to support Member States in meeting the commitments of the Geneva Plan of Action and the Tunis Agenda in respect of IDNs;

6   to make proposals, where appropriate, for achieving the aims of this resolution;

7   to bring this resolution to the attention of WIPO and UNESCO, which is facilitator for the implementation of WSIS Action Line C8, stressing the concerns and requests for assistance of Member States, in particular the developing countries, with regard to multilingual IDNs, and their insistence on help from the Union in this field, in order to ensure increased Internet accessibility and advancement across language barriers, thereby increasing the international use of the Internet;

8   to report annually to the Council on the activities undertaken and achievements attained on this subject, including the related activities in the ICANN GAC,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, in close collaboration with the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1   to give more attention and develop initiatives, with engagement of various stakeholders, to promote awareness, understanding and implementation of IDNs, particularly in developing countries;

2   to contribute to the ongoing implementation of this resolution,

instructs the ITU Council

to consider the activities of the Secretary-General and Directors of the Bureaux with regard to the implementation of this resolution and to take necessary actions, as appropriate,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1   to share and exchange information on developments pertaining to IDNs;

2   to take an active part in all international discussions and initiatives on the further development and deployment of IDNs, including the initiatives of relevant language groups, and to submit contributions to ITU in order to help implement this resolution;

3   to urge all relevant entities to work on the further deployment and implementation of IDNs in order to expedite their activities in this area;

4   to promote capacity building, information-sharing and the exchange of best practices among all stakeholders in the deployment and implementation of IDNs;

5   to consider how to further promote the adoption of universal acceptance in respect of IDNs and to collaborate and coordinate with relevant organizations and stakeholders in enabling the use of IDNs in the Internet.

(Marrakesh, 2002) – (Rev. Antalya, 2006) – (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) – (Rev. Busan, 2014) – (Rev. Dubai, 2018) – (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)