



**Comments to the ICANN Board on the Topic of the
Disappearance of the Process Regarding the RFP for sTLDs
at the Public Forum, Carthage, October 30, 2003**

As the Community knows, the travel constituency has been pursuing the **.travel** sTLD for three years, since the original application – and like all those that were not selected in 2000 we are in a “pending” status.

I would like to make two observations, and explain our concerns.

The first is that we want everyone to understand that we are very sympathetic to the Board and Staff issues and concerns, and appreciate the amount of work ahead of them. We are also 100% supportive of the President’s vision and goals. No one wants a steady state ICANN more than we. We believe that our actions and participation over these last three years is evidence of that. And we intend to continue in this effort as we are strong supporters of ICANN.

The second observation is that I would like to make is to correct any misconceptions that our position with regard to the disappearance of the process we have been in – i.e., the development and posting of the sTLD RFP – is not that the travel industry has a “right” to have an industry-specific TLD, as no industry can be so presumptive. No industry or group is entitled. We fully understand and respect the basic tenant for applying for a TLD is that all applicants must go through a transparent, predictable process and ultimately meet the criteria approved by the Board.

Therefore, we fully agree that the issue at hand is far greater than a single applicant's concern. And, we were heartened that the gNSO Council supported our strong concern about this situation.

The Council's minutes, which are transcribed are a matter of record, and we urge the board to fully review these transcribed minutes.

We understand that the new board members and the new staff are seeking to fully understand and manage many conflicting responsibilities. As is the case for all of us in the community. That is why it is so important that ICANN achieve a much improved delivery on expectations.

We believe that there was documented support for the introduction of the interim round, and we, and others in the community accepted the indications and acted with integrity and focused response. It is very important for ICANN's success that the perceived commitments and expectations are met.

Finally, it is also very important to note that this action imposes significant risks and burdens – financial and otherwise – on all those which have been developing their applications since the process was initiated by ICANN in Shanghai.

We are truly hopeful that the Board will take all of these points into consideration, but most importantly, we pray that the concern we raise about bottom up, consensus-driven process will be looked at once again and that the Board will look to work with the Community to find a solution to this current dilemma in as expeditious time frame as possible.

I would like to conclude, by once again stating that our intention is to work with the Board and Community to build a stronger, more reliable ICANN.

We thank the Board, the ICANN Staff, and the community for its consideration of these comments.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted by:
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