28 September 2013

Olivier MJ Crépin-Leblond
Chair, At-Large Advisory Committee

Re: ALAC Statements on Community Expertise in Community Priority Evaluation

Dear Olivier,

On behalf of the New gTLD Program Committee (NGPC), I thank you for providing the ALAC Statement on " Community Expertise in Community Priority Evaluation," dated 9 August 2013.   The NGPC appreciates the attention the ALAC has given to this topic and has reviewed the statement carefully.

Please note that the Community Priority Evaluation (CPE) Panel firm was selected via a public procurement process. You may view the final calls for expression of interest at (http://archive.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/eoi-commun-priority-31jul09-en.pdf). Candidates were evaluated against the criteria outlined in the requests for proposals. All firms selected to participate in the CPE were retained based on their competence, expertise, resources, and geographic diversity, and all evaluation panels are expected to respect the principles of fairness and non-discrimination.

ICANN engaged Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) to provide management and evaluation services for the CPE process. EIU has a global network of more than 900 analysts and contributors, and continuously assesses political, economic, and business conditions in more than 200 countries. EIU evaluators are selected based on their knowledge of specific countries, regions, and/or industries as they relate to applications. EIU evaluators are also subject to a conflict of interest check to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest or biases that may affect the evaluation of particular applications.

EIU will evaluate community-based applications that are eligible for CPE based on the criteria defined in Module 4 of the Applicant Guidebook. To ensure that the review is consistent, EIU has developed evaluation guidelines, which have been posted publicly. ICANN has provided a mechanism for members of the community to provide input on these guidelines (http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/announcements-and-media/announcement-4-16aug13-en). We note that the ALAC has submitted a comment in this regard (http://atlarge.icann.org/en/correspondence/statement-cpe-guidelines-09sep13-en.pdf), and EIU will consider the ALAC's feedback as it finalizes the evaluation guidelines.

The NGPC appreciates the offer made by the ALAC to provide community volunteers to serves as Panel members or advisors. However, the NGPC determined that it would not be appropriate to introduce external parties to the EIU's evaluation process.

Once again, the NGPC wishes to thank the ALAC for its valuable input and continued participation in ICANN's multi-stakeholder process.

The NGPC hopes that the information provided in this letter is helpful.

Best regards,

Cherine Chalaby
Chair, New gTLD Program Committee