Dear VIP Coordination Team,

The ALAC would like to acknowledge the extraordinary work done by the IDN Variant Issues Project (VIP) study teams and invite all Regional At Large Structures to solicit views from their members on the studies and will further provide our advice on the VIP integrated report when it is published for public comments.

Recognising the significance and importance that IDNs play in enhancing diversity, preserving language, and democratizing access; Recognising the rights of the consumers to express themselves in the language of their choice; and Embracing cultural diversity as a driving force of development, not only in respect of economic growth, but also as a means of leading a more fulfilling intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual life; We would also recommend that the Board set aside financial and technical resources for outreach purposes on the adoption and accessibility of IDNs and factor it into the Strategic Development Plan.

On the work of the VIP study team reports, we observe a diverse set of issues and unique circumstances for the different languages and scripts considered. From the documented IDN variant issues, we note that issues stem from various origins, including technical (Unicode codepoint allocations), historical, political, language evolution and usage, coincidental “look-a-likes”, etc. We would advice the VIP to identify and report on the types of issues that should be handled as IDN variant issues versus those that should be handled by other user confusion avoidance mechanisms applicable overall to non-IDN as well as IDN TLDs. Such distinction and explanation would provide context important and useful for the general community at-large to provide comment and response to the work at the VIP.

We also observe the possible disparity between the policy and technical implications of implementation. We therefore advice the VIP to also identify the readiness of implementation, including the level of consensus within the language community, the impact across languages, and most importantly to avoid disadvantaging language communities that have implementable policies ready.

We thank the VIP study teams for their prompt and thorough studies and look forward to the integrated report and the equally prompt implementation of IDN variant TLDs critical to the language communities currently disadvantaged by the incomplete IDN implementation especially for in the new gTLD process.

Regards,

ALAC