

**The Middle East Space
Online Virtual Meeting on Monday 27 July 2020**

**The Third Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT3) Report
Final Draft Statement**

We, the Middle East (ME) Space community members, participating in the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) Middle East Space gathered on Monday 27 July 2020, discussed the recommendations of the third Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT3) Final Report and came up with this statement.

The ATRT team submitted its revised report to the board on 1 June 2020. The team had prioritized the following topics and we listed them below in their numerical order:

3. Public Input
7. Assessment of the Implementation of ATRT2 Recommendations
8. Assessment of Periodic (now Specific) and Organizational Reviews
9. Accountability and Transparency Relating to Strategic and Operational Plans including Accountability Indicators
10. Prioritization of Review and Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability, Work Stream 2 (WS2) Recommendations

3. Public Input

In order to smooth the process of issue understanding, we suggest that in the same page of public comment of a certain report, a hyperlink be added to access to a community page in which the public comments are reflected in the final report.

Regarding the complexity of some issues, we recommend that the duration of public comment be extended because, with a more sufficient period of time, there is a chance to gain a comprehensive view of the problem, especially for newcomers who can then provide more precise feedback and suggestions. It will also lead to more participation, as newcomers will get the chance to gather information and share their opinions.

This public input recommendation has been considered as low priority. We do not believe that this is a low priority recommendation as on at least one occasion during 2019, ICANN had issued calls for comments on important issues but the community missed them because it was not a part of formal public comment channel. The ICANN org needs to address this issue immediately and fully implement the ATRT group's recommendations regarding public input.

We appreciate that ICANN supports the non-English languages such as Arabic. However, unfortunately, only a few community members are aware of Arabic resources' existence related to public comments. We suggest that ICANN communication office along with the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) provide a plan for advertising the non-English translated/generated contents and attracting more public comments in languages other than English.

In order to obtain a trustworthy assessment of the effectiveness of implemented improvements, we strongly suggest that a special focus be made on monitoring the "commenting members" from various aspects as follows:

- how many new community members are added to the list of commenters by each year,
- what percentage of the number of previously active members remained active during the new year,
- analysis of the area each commenter tends to comment on.

7. Assessment of the Implementation of ATRT2 Recommendations

We would suggest to the ATRT3 to revisit ATRT2 recommendations, which are not implemented to make sure that they are all designed to be S.M.A.R.T.¹ and necessary to be implemented. Furthermore, it will be helpful to have a report on why some of the recommendations of ATRT2 are not implemented (or not implementable).

8. Assessment of Periodic (now Specific) and Organizational Reviews

We praise ICANN org for developing the "Operating Standards for Specific Reviews" that are mandated by ICANN's Bylaws and adopted by the board in June 2019 to guide how current and future ICANN Specific Reviews are conducted. We strongly recommend that ICANN Org holds a workshop on the "Operating Standards for Specific Reviews" to all Supporting Organizations or Advisory Committees (SOs/ACs) leadership teams and the community to make them aware and ready to adhere and to guide them on how current and future ICANN specific reviews are conducted.

We support the ATRT3 recommendations related to specific reviews (including the ICANN holistic review), while for the organizational reviews, we find that some of the recommendations go against what the community thought both in Cross Community

¹ S - specific, M - measurable, A - attainable, R - realistic, T - time-bound

Working Group on Accountability Work Stream 2 (CCWG WS2) of the accountability for SOs/ACs and during the second period for public comment.

During Work Stream 2, the SOs/ACs clearly expressed that it would be too burdensome to impose the accountability practices on them and that they have their own internal mechanisms. For this reason, the CCWG WS2 did not require SOs/ACs to implement its recommendations but they were turned into best practices.²

In public comments on the first report of this group, SOs/ACs emphasized that holding workshops to self-inspect is more appropriate but it seems that the final report does not bind itself to self-inspection and requires SOs/ACs to take internal surveys.³

9. Accountability and Transparency Relating to Strategic and Operational Plans including Accountability Indicators

We support the recommendations of the ATRT3 on Accountability and Transparency Relating to Strategic and Operational Plans including Accountability Indicators.

10. Prioritization and Rationalization of Activities, Policies, and Recommendations

We consider the creation of a **community-led entity** tasked with operating a prioritization process for recommendations with its proposed composition a good approach. Nevertheless, we don't want it to create a community burnout especially for the fully volunteer ones, which may turn into a "community-led" entity functioning with only those who are paid for their participation in ICANN activities.

We, the Middle East (ME) Space community members, would like to thank the ATRT3 members for their excellent work and their clear recommendations. The proposed improvements of the review processes, especially for the organizational review one seem innovative. We look forward to see to what extent and when these recommendations will get implemented.

² CCWG on ICANN accountability, Workstream 2 final report , p.28, <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/ccwg-acct-ws2-final-24jun18-en.pdf>

³ Community comments, page 5 <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/report-comments-atrt3-draft-report-14feb20-en.pdf>