



FRANCE STATEMENT

The Future of ICANN after the expiration of the Joint Project Agreement (JPA)

France welcomes the Affirmation of Commitments released on September 30th by the Department of Commerce and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), under which ICANN commits to undertaking the institutional reforms required to make it fully accountable. France will actively participate in the consultation processes established for that purpose and is willing, in coordination with its European partners, to facilitate those processes, as indicated in the public statement issued by the Swedish Presidency of the EU.

- 1) The Internet has become a globally shared infrastructure critical to the proper functioning of our societies. France therefore considers that the naming and addressing system underlying the Internet must be managed from a global public interest perspective, with due care given to upholding citizens' rights, enabling diverse forms of expression, and safeguarding the security of information systems.
- 2) Consequently, France welcomes the Affirmation of Commitments issued jointly by the Department of Commerce and ICANN on September 30th, 2009 regarding the future of the Internet naming and addressing system and in particular the reaffirmation of the public trust dimension of ICANN's role in managing this global public resource.
- 3) The new environment created by the end of the Joint Project Agreement imparts upon ICANN an enhanced responsibility in the coming months to spearhead the institutional reforms required to make the organization fully multi-stakeholder and international, and to implement the mechanisms that will ensure its accountability to all stakeholders.
- 4) The Affirmation of Commitments proposes, inter alia, to entrust the necessary periodic evaluation of the organization's performance to dedicated review panels, instead of exclusively to the United States government.

France will actively participate in the discussions on the practical terms of implementing this proposal, as they will ultimately determine its efficiency.

5) Beyond this system, France reaffirms the need to enhance the role of governments in the current Internet governance mechanisms, and particularly within ICANN, so that they can fully exercise their share of responsibility in the management of the global public resources of the Internet.

6) In order to implement these new mechanisms of accountability in a timely fashion, ICANN should initiate, at the latest at the upcoming meeting in Seoul, a broad and inclusive consultation process, with a view in particular to finalizing a revised version of its Bylaws at the second meeting in June 2010.

7) ICANN should use, as far as possible, existing international forums – in particular the Internet Governance Forum set up by the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society – to announce this initiative and invite actors that do not ordinarily take part in its activities to engage in this joint effort.

8) France, in coordination with its European partners, is willing to facilitate such a process, in particular by helping to organize open consultations at the national and regional levels. We also propose using the ICANN meeting in June 2010 as an opportunity for a high level gathering that would allow all stakeholders to assess the progress made.

9) Lastly, France would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm that, beyond the development of ICANN and the naming and addressing system, discussion should continue in all relevant forums on developing global Internet governance that complies with the principles and commitments of the World Summit on the Information Society.