Promoting Internet Growth and Innovation Through Multistakeholder Internet Governance

March 19, 2014 by Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling

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This past Friday, NTIA asked the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to convene global stakeholders to develop a proposal to transition the U.S. government's stewardship of the Internet's Domain Name System (DNS). This marks a major milestone toward the final phase of the privatization of the DNS, which was first outlined by the U.S. Government in 1997.

We believe the timing is right for this transition, and a broad group of stakeholders – both domestically and internationally – have expressed their support and cooperation in this process.

Cisco [1] commended NTIA for outlining a "powerful process for the move towards full privatization and globalization of DNS management." Microsoft said it "relies on the stability, resilience and security of the DNS system to enable our cloud services – and we are confident that now is the right time to complete this transition." Other industry giants like AT&T [2], Verizon [3], and Google, similarly issued statements in support of our announcement.

The [Computer and Communications Industry Association](#) [4] called NTIA's actions a "necessary next step in the evolution of the Internet," and other industry trade groups like the [Domain Name Association](#) [5], [Internet Society](#) [6], and [Internet Association](#) [7] also expressed their strong support for our efforts. Public interest groups (Public Knowledge and [Center for Democracy and Technology](#) [8]), and think tanks ([Brookings Institution](#) [9]) also embraced the announcement. And on Capitol Hill, we've heard from a bipartisan group of lawmakers including [Commerce Committee Chairman Sen. John Rockefeller (D-W.V.)](#) [10], [Ranking Member Sen. John Thune (R-S.C.)](#) [11], Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and [Rep. Anna Eshoo](#) [12] (D-Calif.), who support our announcement.

Our announcement has led to some misunderstanding about our plan with some individuals raising concern that the U.S. government is abandoning the Internet. Nothing could be further from the truth. This announcement in no way diminishes our commitment to preserving the Internet as an engine for economic growth and innovation. We will continue to advocate for U.S. interests and an open Internet through our role on ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) and in other international venues including the Internet Governance Forum.

We have been clear throughout this process that any transition plan must meet the conditions of supporting the multistakeholder process and protecting the security, stability and resiliency of the Internet. I have emphasized that we will not accept a proposal that replaces NTIA's role with a government-led or an inter-governmental solution. Until the community comes together on a proposal that meets these conditions, we will continue to perform our current stewardship role.

We look forward to a spirited discussion from the global multistakeholders as they begin discussions on the transition plan at the ICANN meeting in Singapore next week. I am confident that the global community will ultimately develop a thoughtful and appropriate transition plan that the U.S. Government will fully embrace.

Topics:

- [ICANN](#) [13]
- [IANA functions](#) [14]
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Links:
[1] http://blogs.cisco.com/gov/cisco-supports-u-s-department-of-commerce-decision-to-transition-internet-management-functions/

[2] http://www.attpublicpolicy.com/international/the-continuing-evolution-of-the-global-internet/

[3] http://publicpolicy.verizon.com/blog/entry/verizon-supports-global-multi-stakeholder-process-for-domain-names

[4] http://www.ccianet.org/blog/2014/03/tech-industry-praises-liberation-internet-governance-functions-u-s-g/

[5] http://www.thedna.org/pr_20140314.html

[6] http://www.internetsociety.org/news/internet-technical-leaders-welcome-iana-globalization-progress

[7] http://internetassociation.org/03142014ntiaicannannouncement/

[8] https://www.cdt.org/pr_statement/us-cede-control-internet-naming-significant-step-toward-global-internet

[9] http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/techtank/posts/2014/03/15-internet-corporation-for-assigned-names-and-numbers-icann-shifting-responsibility-kerry

[10] http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=b0a9b496-2c09-4712-972a-80638efe6a16

[11] http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=94f39a92-55d9-4e5f-b363-a005b15ebec3&ContentType_id=77eb43da-aa94-497d-a73f-5c951ff72372&Group_id=59da2fee-2988-4fe9-b1dd-ee3219b6f868

[12] http://eshoo.house.gov/press-releases/eshoo-statement-on-ntias-announcement-to-transition-iana-functions/

[13] http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/icann

[14] http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/iana-functions

[15] http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/internet-policy

[16] http://www.ntia.doc.gov/category/domain-name-system