MEAC Strategy Working Group Charter

1. Background on the Middle East Strategy

The idea of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) formulating a regional strategy for the Middle East surfaced in late 2012. A group of more than 20 volunteers from various countries in the region[1] representing all stakeholder groups[2] came together to develop a strategy that defines regional needs in a bottom-up, multistakeholder fashion. The mandate of the strategy was for three years beginning on July 1, 2013, and ending on June 30, 2016.

The strategy document defined the strategic objectives of the region and the actions needed to fulfill those objectives. Additionally, annual strategy implementation plans were developed between 2013 and 2016. More information on the strategy document and the annual implementation plans as well as their respective reviews and assessments are available at: https://community.icann.org/display/MES/Documents.

2. Mission

The mission of the new Middle East and Adjoining Countries (MEAC) Strategy Working Group (MEAC-SWG) is to provide a multistakeholder, community-led venue for independent volunteers and experts from the region to work inclusively and transparently in order to devise a three-year ICANN regional strategy extending between July 2016 and June 2019, catering to the needs of the diverse stakeholders in the MEAC region. The strategy is expected to understand the needs of the Internet ecosystem in the region as well as tackle the obstacles and challenges that hinder its development.

3. Scope

The scope of work of the MEAC-SWG is:

1. Limited to the MEAC region as defined by ICANN;[3]

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[1] The region covered by the 2013-2016 Middle East Strategy included the 22 Arab States (as defined at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_states), Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

[2] The stakeholders include but are not limited to: registries, registrars, resellers, country code top-level domains (ccTLDs), internationalized domain name (IDN) ccTLDs, generic top-level domains (gTLDs) applicants and owners, businesses, civil society, governments, the private sector, academia, and the technical community.

[3] Turkey was not included in the initial 2013-2016 Middle East Strategy. It has since been incorporated into the regional grouping and is included in the 2016-2019 MEAC Strategy.

2. To develop a three-year strategic plan for the period extending from July 2016 through June 2019;

3. To build on the past experience of the 2013-2016 Middle East Strategy, using the successes, lessons learned, future recommendations, and what worked well as examples;

4. To give special attention to countries that require more engagement, including countries experiencing political instability, conflicts, or wars;

5. To emphasize the progress and development of the domain name industry, local content development, domain name system (DNS) security, and Internet governance ecosystem in the MEAC region; and

6. To establish a review mechanism to follow up on the implementation of the three-year strategic plan.

4. Working methods

In achieving its mission, the MEAC-SWG will work in a bottom-up, multistakeholder fashion, relying on the volunteer work of its members. The MEAC-SWG will conduct most of its work online – maximizing the benefits of its mailing list, holding virtual meetings and conference calls as deemed necessary – and making use of online collaboration tools and resources. The MEAC-SWG may hold face-to-face meetings as deemed necessary and appropriate. The working group will operate openly and transparently, and all archives, meeting minutes, and call recordings will be made publicly available online.

MEAC-SWG members will organize their work through ICANN facilitation. MEAC-SWG members will agree among themselves or by no formal opposition on logistical matters such as the scheduling of meetings or other issues.

As deemed necessary, sub-committees or sub-groups may be formed among members of the MEAC-SWG in order to accomplish certain tasks. Each sub-committee or sub-group may have a work lead. Tasks achieved will ultimately feed into the overall work of the group.

The MEAC-SWG will endeavor to achieve consensus throughout its work. Where consensus is not possible, decisions will be taken by rough consensus.[4] ICANN staff will also work to facilitate reaching consensus within the group.

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[4] For a detailed description of rough consensus, see: https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc7282.

Moreover, members should actively participate in the work of the MEAC-SWG. Participating volunteers should maintain momentum and be committed to handing the deliverables in accordance with the agreed upon timeframes.

In order to have an effective and continuous review of the MEAC strategy, all MEAC-SWG members are expected to attend at least two meetings per year throughout the mandate of the MEAC strategy, and no member is expected to attend less than one meeting per year. Meetings can be held face-to-face or online. For face-to-face meetings, remote participation will be available in order to facilitate wider participation.

Representatives from organizations that work with ICANN may be invited to observe and provide feedback on MEAC-SWG activities. These include United Nations agencies operating in the region, Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) covering countries in the region, and other international organizations that have presence and/or a stake in some or all of the countries in the MEAC region.

5. Deliverables

The MEAC-SWG is expected to deliver the following:

1. A three-year strategic plan for the 2016-2019 period that takes into consideration the evaluation of the strategy of the last working group;
2. Implementation plan(s), including a breakdown of activities, timeline, and focus areas;
3. A review mechanism for the implementation of the strategic plan that ensures a multistakeholder approach is followed, and identifying annual key performance indicators (KPI) to be able to align the stated strategy on annual basis;
4. A regularly updated wiki page with details about the actions taken by the MEAC-SWG, such as activities, meetings, correspondence, media coverage, etc.;
5. A framework for executing the strategy, and this would include a timeline and an action plan; and
6. A special matrix for keeping track of the activities in countries which, due to various reasons, are facing challenging situations for local communities to get engaged. Countries experiencing political instability, conflicts, or wars, and countries that need more attention in light of the MEAC DNS Report[5] fall under this category.

6. Membership

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[5] The document is available at: https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/meac-dns-study-26feb16-en.pdf.

Members of the working group should come from across the region and should preferably represent all relevant stakeholder groups in order to accommodate the different perspectives that exist.

MEAC-SWG members are expected to show strong commitment and be actively engaged in the work of the strategy group. Anyone can apply to become a member of the MEAC-SWG provided she/he submits an Expression of Interest (EOI) for their willingness to become a member of the MEAC-SWG.

Observers are welcome to join the MEAC-SWG and are not required to submit an EOI to join the group. The roles and expectations of "members" and "observers" are defined in Section 7 below.

7. Role identification

The different roles that members of the MEAC-SWG may take on to support its success include but are not limited to the following:

Chair: Schedules and chairs meetings, develops action plans, ensures the effective operation of the MEAC-SWG as per the charter, oversees that the various volunteers conduct tasks as agreed or assigned, synthesizes views in order to reach consensus, and determines if rough consensus has been reached. The chair has to dedicate enough time to his/her mission and keep members engaged in working toward achieving the goals and objectives of the MEAC-SWG in collaboration with the vice chair and facilitator.

Vice Chair: Assists the chair in executing his/her roles, and chairs the meetings and calls in the absence of the chair.

Facilitator (ICANN staff): Helps the chair plan meetings, facilitates the internal interaction between members by managing logistics, setting up meeting times and virtual rooms, sending reminders and updates to members, fixing any technical issues that require attention, and assisting with travel arrangements for physical meetings. Additionally, the facilitator serves the role of secretary for the meeting by writing and distributing minutes (and/or transcripts, recordings, etc.), manages the creation of subgroups and their outputs, and updates the relevant sections of the MEAC-SWG wiki page[6] with the latest information regarding the MEAC-SWG's meetings, news, and activities.

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[6] ICANN will maintain a working space for the MEAC-SWG at:
https://community.icann.org/display/MES/Middle+East+Working+Group.

Members: Support the work of the MEAC-SWG by actively participating in the mailing list discussions as well as attend as many meetings as possible in accordance with the criteria defined in Section 4, provide feedback, and assist in any capacity they can to improve the overall work of the MEAC-SWG so it can achieve its goals.

Observers: Are free to join public mailing lists to observe and oversee the activities of the MEAC-SWG. They can comment through the mailing lists on the work done by the MEAC-SWG. Observers are not expected to participate in the actual work activities of the MEAC-SWG and cannot take leadership roles in the MEAC-SWG.

Members of the MEAC-SWG can nominate themselves to any of the leadership roles, and contested members are encouraged to resolve any contention among themselves in a professional and collegial manner.

8. Performance review

Every six months, the MEAC-SWG will issue a report on the performance of the working group against the requirements of the charter.

The MEAC-SWG may review and then make changes to this charter. All members should agree to review the charter, and the reason for the review must be documented clearly. Changes made to the charter must be deemed absolutely necessary to make the charter more effective, practical, and necessary to improve the MEAC-SWG's performance. Those changes must also be documented clearly and meticulously, and garner the approval of all MEAC-SWG members.

9. Members of the Charter Drafting Group

The members of the Charter Drafting Group included the following:

1. Michael Oghia	20. Wafa Dahmani
2. Zied Fakhfakh	21. Ahlem Ismail
3. Nadira Alaraj	22. Abdelhamid Al Abbadi
4. Hafedh Alyahmadi	23. Malek BG
5. Mohammad Zeidan	24. Zahr Bou Ghanem
6. Walid Al-Saqaf	25. Oussama Hamal
7. Mustapha Ben Jemaa	26. Ahmed Bakhat Masood

8. Amr Elsadr
9. Ridha Guellouz
10. Rao Naveed Bin Rais
11. Zakir Bin Rehman
12. Fouad Bajwa
13. Mohamed ElGohary
14. Manal Ismail
15. Wael Nasr
16. Hadia El Miniawi
17. Nabil Bukhalid
18. Omer Mohamed Fadul
19. Said Marjan Zazai

27. Zied Dridi
28. Rafik Dammak
29. Chokri Ben Romdhane
30. Mohamed Benyahia
31. Mohamed Najeh Issaoui
32. Houda Belkassem
33. Mohamed Majdoubi
34. Ali Almeshal
35. Mahmoud Lattouf
36. Baher Esmat (ICANN Staff)
37. Fahd Batayneh (ICANN Staff)