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ICANN Approves Trademark Clearinghouse

Nairobi, Kenya... March 12, 2010... In closing ICANN's 37th International meeting in Nairobi, ICANN's Board of Directors adopted a pioneering package including an extensive database of trademarks for their protections on the Internet.

"In forming this trademark clearinghouse, we've listened to our community about providing trademark protection," said Peter Dengate Thrush, ICANN's Chairman of the Board. "We've also adopted an extremely rapid process by which people or organizations can challenge trademark infringement."

In other actions, the Board rejected a proposal to implement a system of "Expressions of Interest" (EOI), which would have been a pre-registration process for those wishing to apply for new generic top-level domains (gTLDs).

The expansion of generic top-level domains (gTLD), has been a subject of considerable discussion and planning within ICANN's Internet community. gTLDs are the end portion of an Internet address name, such as ".com" or ".org" and are not associated with any specific country. Under ICANN's new procedures, the number of these gTLDs will eventually be expanded from its current list of 21 to include almost any word, in almost any language.

The Board agreed to post process options to reconsider the proposed controversial .XXX sponsored top-level domain within the next two weeks. A decision on the process is scheduled to occur at or before ICANN's next international meeting in Brussels in June. Last month, an Independent Review Panel (IRP) issued a non-binding declaration which held 2-1 that a 2007 decision to reject ICM's application for a .XXX top-level domain

was flawed. In 2004, the ICM registry applied for the .XXX sponsored top-level domain as a potential community site for the adult entertainment industry. The IRP is one of ICANN's accountability processes that allow any aggrieved party to request a review of an ICANN board action.

The Board also voted to include in any new gTLD agreements a ban on cross ownership between ICANN accredited registrars and registries. The Board voted to tighten the vertical separation restrictions between two parts of the domain name industry, instead focusing attention on a bottom-up policy development process in ICANN's Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO), to determine whether or not there should be vertical integration within the industry contracts.

"This was one of the most productive ICANN meetings in a place that is helping to define what Internet access should become across the African continent," said Rod Beckstrom, Chief Executive Officer and President. "The new fiber optic infrastructure here in Kenya allowed the ICANN team to access and use the Internet at some of the fastest speeds we've ever encountered at any ICANN meeting anywhere."

The next ICANN International Meeting is scheduled to be held in Brussels, Belgium, June 20-25.

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To see a videotaped interview with Rod Beckstrom talking about the Board meeting, go here:

<http://www.icann.org/en/press/>

Transcripts and Board reports may be viewed here: [http://nbo.icann.org/nbo/documents?tid\[\]=172&tid\[\]=354](http://nbo.icann.org/nbo/documents?tid[]=172&tid[]=354)

To read a chronology of the .XXX issue, go here: <http://www.icann.org/en/irp/icm-v-icann/icm-icann-history-21feb10-en.pdf>.

To read about the "Expressions of Interest" proposal go here:

<http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-2-18dec09-en.htm>.

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About ICANN:

To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique identifiers across the world. Without that coordination we wouldn't have one global Internet. ICANN was formed in 1998. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. ICANN doesn't control content on the Internet. It cannot stop spam and it doesn't deal with access to the Internet. But through its coordination role of the Internet's naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. **For more information please visit: www.icann.org.**