

10 July 2020

RE: ME Space Statement on Universal Acceptance & Email Address Internationalization using Arabic Script

Nadira Al Araj and Tijani Ben Jemaa  
Co-chairs, ME Space

Dear Nadira and Tijani:

ICANN organization thanks the Middle East (ME) Space community members for sharing the *Statement on Universal Acceptance & Email Address Internationalization using Arabic Script* (the ME UA and EAI Statement), which was adopted on 8 June 2020 during the Middle East Space virtual session and communicated on 11 June 2020. The statement has been posted at <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/correspondence/jemaa-alaraj-to-icann-board-11jun20-en.pdf>.

Universal Acceptance (UA) means that all domain names and email addresses are working in all software applications. Due to its significance in fostering competition, consumer choice, and innovation in the Internet space, the promotion and adoption of UA has been included as part of the [ICANN Strategic Plan for 2021-2025](#) which was [adopted](#) by the ICANN Board. Increasing UA readiness requires a considered global effort. Therefore, ICANN org has set up a UA Program to plan and undertake UA-related work. The program is mobilizing and supporting the community efforts towards achieving UA readiness, including the community-based Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG).

Since ICANN org's [response](#) to the earlier [ME Space Statement on UA](#), I am happy to acknowledge an increased contribution of ME Community in the UASG efforts. Specific to Email Address Internationalization (EAI), UASG has formed an [EAI working group](#) which is actively working towards supporting and promoting EAI. It is identifying technological gaps in EAI, addressing them and also developing a best practice guide for email administrators. We encourage more ME community members to get involved in this working group and provide input on the issues specific to Arabic script as well as provide appropriate guidance to address such issues.

Please also find below responses on the specific items in the ME UA and EAI Statement addressed to ICANN org:

- a. We will communicate the suggestions by ME Space related to Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) on UA and EAI readiness to the GAC UA Working Group to determine the most appropriate mechanism to address them.
- b. ICANN org is actively outreaching to the community on the importance of UA and how to adopt it. This is being achieved using multiple channels, which include the outreach through Communications, Global Stakeholders and Technical Engagement teams of ICANN org at ICANN meetings and regional events. In addition, ICANN org is also supporting UASG's efforts for outreach through its Communications working group, Ambassadors and the recently formed Local Initiatives. Both At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) and GAC have also formed working groups to reach to

their broader membership. We will continue to grow the momentum to reach the wider community.

- c. ICANN org has itself been striving to be make its systems UA-ready since 2017. It has made considerable progress, which has been documented in a [case study](#) recently published. UASG is also encouraging the use of IDNs and EAI through its local initiatives, including encouraging them to create EAI test-beds for promoting local use. ICANN org and UASG also continue to undertake considerable outreach and training for this purpose, including a UA Train-the-Trainer program, which is current underway, training 40 participants from across 17 countries. These trainers, who include volunteers from the ME region, are now training locally to support implementation of UA and EAI. We will continue to engage the community to promote UA readiness.
- d. ICANN org is also planning to publish UA related training material on ICANN Learn. We will work towards making it available in multiple languages. In addition, UASG is actively publishing [technical reports](#), [training materials](#), [case studies](#), and [other materials](#) on UA online for use by the community.

On behalf of ICANN org, I thank the ME Space for the guidance provided through the ME UA and EAI Statement. We would also invite the ME Space community to follow the conversation around Universal Acceptance (#Internet4All) on social media including [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) and visit the website [UASG.tech](#) for updates. Please feel free to contact us by emailing to [UAProgram@icann.org](mailto:UAProgram@icann.org) for any queries related to UA. We look forward to working with ME Space and community to address the UA and EAI challenges.

Sincerely,



Sarmad Hussain  
Director, IDN and UA Programs