

International Organizations Join the Opposition to ICANN's New gTLD Program

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ICANN will start accepting applications for new gTLDs on January 12, 2012. But not before further public opposition to the program builds. Most recently, the United Nations, International Monetary Fund and a host of other intergovernmental organizations ("IGOs") have joined the growing list of opponents to ICANN's new program. A recent **letter** sent to ICANN on behalf of the IGO community indicates that their concerns "relate to the increased potential for the misleading registration and use of IGO names and acronyms in the domain name system under ICANN's significant expansion plans." This is the **latest** in a rising wave of opposition to the rollout of the new gTLD program. In early December, the FTC Chairman told the House Judiciary Committee that this program could be a "disaster." The U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation subsequently **suggested** that ICANN to scale back the gTLD program or postpone the launch to 2013.

As part of the application process, ICANN will **publicize** a list of those applying for a top-level domain, thereby eliminating proxies, and will allow third-parties to file formal objections to such applications. Critics, however, remain skeptical that such measures will be sufficient to combat the risk of cybersquatting and fraud that the new gTLD program potentially poses.

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