

Republic of Lebanon  
Telecommunications  
Regulatory Authority

**Beirut, 28 February 2014**  
**Ref: TRA/PRE/059-280214**

**To: Ms. Cherine Chalaby, Chairman of the New gTLD Program Committee,  
ICANN New gTLD Program Committee  
ICANN Board Members,**

**Subject: Position of Lebanon Regarding New gTLD Applications for Red Cross and Crescent, and Associated Designation, Names, Words, etc.**

Dear Ms. Chalaby,

Dear New gTLD Program Committee Members,

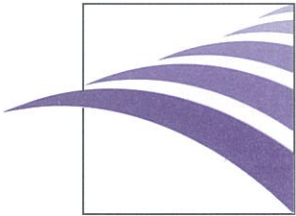
Dear ICANN Board Members,

Reference is made to inform you the Lebanese position regarding new gTLD applications for .REDCROSS and .REDCRESCENT as follows:

I attach to his message a request from Mr. Georges Kettaneh, Secretary General of the "Lebanese Red Cross" regarding the Protection of the RED CROSS and RED CRESCENT designations and names.

This is a clear call for the permanent protection to be granted to the "Red Cross", "Red Crescent" and "Red Crystal" and related designations (words) and related names from registration as top and second level domain names under the new gTLD programme.

Representatives of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement ("Movement") have been engaged in a dialogue with ICANN and its respective constituencies since 2011 in order to achieve this protection. However, to date only temporary protection has been granted for the designations (words) but not to the names of the 189 National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)[1]. This effectively means there is no protection for the *Lebanese Red Cross*, *Lebanese Red Crescent*, other National Societies, the ICRC, or the IFRC in the new gTLD programme.



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The protection of the “Red Cross”, “Red Crescent” and “Red Crystal” designations (words) stems from international law – namely the 1949 Geneva Conventions, to which the Government of *Lebanon and over 190 other Governments are Party* - as well as from the national laws in force in over 130 countries<sup>[2]</sup>. Pursuant to the express terms of international and national law, the distinctive emblems and their designations play an essential function in wartime and in other humanitarian emergencies, and are protected at all times. Their misuse undermines the protections afforded under the Geneva Conventions which all States Party to the Geneva Conventions are obliged to provide. This protection is also based on public interest because of the particular risks of fraudulent misuse of the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations and names which we regularly witness in humanitarian crises. An outline of this legal protection and examples of misuse have been provided to ICANN and the GAC.

While the GAC has been supportive of the protections being sought by *Lebanese Red Cross* and the rest of the Movement, we ask that the ICANN Board needs to receive clear and unequivocal advice from the GAC that the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations (words) and names receive permanent protection.

Thus, on behalf of the Lebanese National Society and the entire Movement, we respectfully call for the GAC to make a comprehensive statement to ICANN’s Board calling for the permanent protections of the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations (words) and names to ICANN’s Board. Given the impending consideration by ICANN’s Board to recent GNSO Recommendations in this matter, we respectfully request that such advice be developed and provided without delay.

The Government of Lebanon requests the support of the GAC and its members through supporting the request of the Lebanese Red Cross. We also ask that a clear message is sent to the ICANN Board to that effect.

Thank you for the consideration and your support.

**Dr. Imad Y. Hoballah**

**Lebanon's Representative to the ICANN-GAC**

**Acting Chairman and CEO, TRA, Lebanon**



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**To the country representative on the Government Advisory Committee of ICANN  
regarding the  
Protection of the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations and names**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Government of *Lebanon* designated the **Lebanese Red Cross** as auxiliary to the Government under the terms of the Geneva Conventions and their three Additional Protocols. As auxiliary, and pursuant to the rights and protections afforded under the Geneva Conventions to which the Government is Party, the **Lebanese Red Cross** respectfully requests your full support as the national representative on the Government Advisory Committee (GAC) of ICANN, in calling for the permanent protection to be granted to the “Red Cross”, “Red Crescent” and “Red Crystal” and related designations (words) and related names from registration as top and second level domain names under the new gTLD programme.

Representatives of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (“Movement”) have been engaged in a dialogue with ICANN and its respective constituencies since 2011 in order to achieve this protection. However, to date only temporary protection has been granted for the designations (words) but not to the names of the 189 National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)[1]. This effectively means there is no protection for the **Lebanese Red Cross**, other National Societies, the ICRC, or the IFRC in the new gTLD programme.

The protection of the “Red Cross”, “Red Crescent” and “Red Crystal” designations (words) stems from international law – namely the 1949 Geneva Conventions, to which the Government of *Lebanon* and over 190 other Governments are Party - as well as from the national laws in force in over 130 countries[2]. Pursuant to the express terms of international and national law, the distinctive emblems and their designations play an essential function in wartime and in other humanitarian emergencies, and are protected at all times. Their misuse undermines the protections afforded under the Geneva Conventions which all States Party to the Geneva Conventions are obliged to provide. This protection is also based on public interest because of the particular risks of fraudulent misuse of the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations and names

which we regularly witness in humanitarian crises. An outline of this legal protection and examples of misuse have been provided to ICANN and the GAC.

While the GAC has been supportive of the protections being sought by **Lebanese Red Cross** and the rest of the Movement, the ICANN Board now needs to receive clear and unequivocal advice from the GAC that the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations (words) and names receive permanent protection. A summary of the protections sought is annexed to this document.

Thus, on behalf of my National Society and the entire Movement, we respectfully request that you call for the GAC to make a comprehensive statement to ICANN's Board calling for the permanent protections of the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations (words) and names to ICANN's Board. Given the impending consideration by ICANN's Board to recent GNSO Recommendations in this matter, we respectfully request that such advice **be developed and provided without delay.**

We, together with the ICRC and the International Federation stand ready to provide you with any complementary information that you would require in this regard.

Yours faithfully

**Georges Kettaneh**

*Secretary General*

*Lebanese Red Cross*