Message to the AFRINIC Community

17 June 2022

This is a message to the AFRINIC community from the undersigned Regional Internet Registries (RIRs).

The five RIRs ensure the uniqueness of Internet number resources across the world. A key strength of the RIRs is that our regional basis allows distinct communities with their own histories, cultures, political systems and needs to determine the policies that best govern the registries in their respective regions. We believe this system is robust, effective and worth fighting for.

The current challenges affecting AFRINIC are of great concern to us. We urge the AFRINIC membership and the wider community in Africa, including civil society and governments, to work together to support their RIR at a time when it needs assistance and guidance in the form of constructive input.

The excessive number of court cases against AFRINIC are of particular concern to other RIRs because they represent a threat to AFRINIC's autonomy and its community. These challenges are designed, we believe, to cause serious damage to both.

All RIRs have faced various challenges over the years, whether legal, political, financial or otherwise. Financial and political interests are also becoming a factor in the registration of Internet resources in a way that they were not previously. In such a situation, robust governance is essential if the RIR is to be able to meet the challenges it faces. More than anything, this requires the constructive involvement of that RIR's members.

So while we acknowledge that there is still work to be done within AFRINIC to address the challenges that it faces, these challenges will not be solved in an adversarial environment. For positive outcomes to be achieved, AFRINIC, its membership and its community must all be committed to working together in an open and transparent way to ensure the outcome is in the best interest of the membership and inline with the community-developed policies.

Our Commitment

With this message, the other four RIRs (APNIC, ARIN, LACNIC and the RIPE NCC) wish to reaffirm the following:

- The purpose of an RIR is to support community self-determination on the best approach to regional Internet issues, balancing individual and regional needs with the regional and global needs of the Internet.
- Each RIR community is autonomous, but it must work to maintain relationships and trust among its members, and it must be able to do so free from the threat of outside interference.
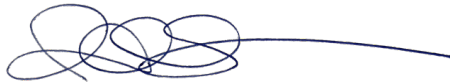
- The regional activities and policy process of an RIR are solely in the hands of that community, but the health of those processes is of paramount importance to the global Internet community.
- We are committed to ensuring the health, stability and success of the system that we administer, as well as the Internet and its constituent RIR communities.

To the AFRINIC community, we wish to say, AFRINIC is your RIR.

Its challenges are your challenges, and its successes are your successes. We urge you to come together to help steer AFRINIC in a positive direction and to build on the contributions that you have all made to the development of the Internet on your continent.
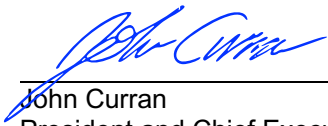
Thank you.

Signed this 17 June 2022, by:

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