RegITHON2025

Internet Society
Armenia Chapter

ISOC.AM

Internet Society
Foundation

Enhancing Resilience:
Empowering Armenia's .AM Registrars and Technical Community

With the support of the **Internet Society Foundation**, a one-day conference was held on June 21 in Yerevan. The event brought together local and international IT experts, registrars, and specialists who were deeply interested in the development and future of the **.am** domain.

During the conference, participants engaged in detailed discussions about the potential impact of the draft law on cybersecurity and how it might affect the .am domain ecosystem.

They also explored effective mechanisms for responding to domain abuse, sharing experiences and examining international best practices to address emerging challenges.

The event **"Enhancing Resilience: Empowering Armenia's .AM Registrars and Technical Community"** successfully brought together key stakeholders from the local technical community, including .AM registrars, ccTLD managers, network operators, and cybersecurity professionals.

Presentations and panel discussions covered best practices for DNS management, international registrar standards, and secure domain operations.

A practical session focused on modern DNSSEC deployment and abuse detection mechanisms, led by the international experts from Clean DNS, enhanced participants' technical capacities.

Discussions during the event led to plans for a follow-up workshop focused on DNS abuse response frameworks and registrar responsibility under Armenia's evolving cybersecurity law.

In addition to these critical topics, the event covered the latest trends in Web3 development and the integration of blockchain technologies within the .am domain framework. Experts highlighted how these innovations could open new opportunities for decentralized and secure internet services.

Another important focus of the conference was on intellectual property protection, where specialists discussed challenges and solutions relevant to safeguarding digital assets in the Armenian internet space.

Overall, the event successfully fostered collaboration and strengthened ties between .am domain registrars and their local and international partners. It emphasized the importance of joint efforts to enhance digital security, support innovation, and ensure a resilient and forward-looking internet infrastructure for Armenia.

AGENDA

09:00 – 10:00 - Registration, Welcome coffee

10:00 – 10:30 - Opening
➢ Igor Mkrtumyan - ISOC NGO, Board chair
➢ Kristina Hakobyan - Internet Technology Center LLC, Director
➢ Vesmira Harutyunyan - ISOC Armenia chapter PO, Board chair

10:30 – 11:30 - The impact of the draft Law on Cybersecurity of the Republic of Armenia on the development of .am and .huj domains, the operations of domain registrars, and the technical community at large.

Moderator: Samvel Martirosyan - CyberHUB-AM (TBC)
➢ Arshak Kerobyan - Head of digitalization departmena of HTI ministry
➢ Hayk Mkrtchyan -Head of the Cybercrime Department, Police Lieutenant Colonel
➢ ISAA, lawyer
➢ David Alaverdyan - Information Security Teacher of YSU
➢ Gevorg Hayrapetyan - Personal data protection expert
➢ Aram Verdyan - Technical Director of Crossnet LLC

11:30 -13:30 – Workshop

Addressing DNS abuse: Effective response strategies and global best practices for registrars and CSIRTs. Collaborating to Address Abuse Cases: Role-Playing Scenarios.

➢ Chris Lewis-Evans - COO of Clean DNS, Director of Governmental Engagement and Internet Abuse Mitigation

13:30 -14:30 – Lunch

14:30 - 15:15 - Effective Intellectual Property protection in the framework of the domain names, ccTLDs characteristics

Moderator: Christina Gevorgyan - Senior Lawyer of Menq Consulting LLC
➢ Arthur Varderesyan - Managing Partner of Menq Consulting LLC
➢ Tony Kirsch - Commercial Director of Brand Safety Alliance (online)
➢ Vanik Margaryan - Member of the AMCA Board of Trustees and Mediation Advisory Board
➢ Areg Hovhannsyan - Competition Protection Commission, Head of Department of Consumer Protection

15:15 – 16:00 - Web3 domain: how does it work? Implementing blockchain technologies in the .am domain

➢ Nick Cervantes - Web 3 expert, ArmeniaDomains founder
➢ Davit Karapetyan - Technical director of GlobalR LLC

16:00 -16:30 - Coffee

16:30 -17:15 - .am accredited registrars community empowerment action plan:
Strengthening the registry-to-registrar relationship: improving processes and collaboration.
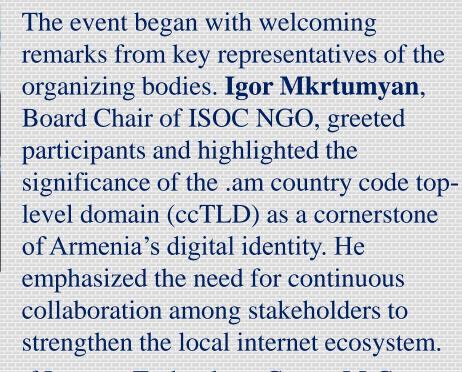Updates on registry-registrar contracts.
➢ Kristina Hakobyan - Internet technology center LLC, Director

17:15 – 18:00 – Wrap up Q and A

Opening

The event began with welcoming remarks from key representatives of the organizing bodies. **Igor Mkrtumyan**, Board Chair of ISOC NGO, greeted participants and highlighted the significance of the .am country code top-level domain (ccTLD) as a cornerstone of Armenia's digital identity. He emphasized the need for continuous collaboration among stakeholders to strengthen the local internet ecosystem.

Kristina Hakobyan, Director of Internet Technology Center LLC, welcomed the guests and stressed the importance of innovation and responsible management in the evolution of the .am domain. She noted the growing interest from the tech community in integrating modern technologies.

Vesmira Harutyunyan, Board Chair of ISOC Armenia Chapter PO, extended her appreciation to the participants and partners, underlining the chapter's ongoing efforts to support the Armenian tech community and promote a secure, resilient, and inclusive internet environment through different initiatives.

The impact of the draft Law on Cybersecurity on the development of .am and .հայ domains, the operations of domain registrars, and the technical community at large

This session explored the potential implications of the draft Law on Cybersecurity on the management and development of the .am and .հայ domains, domain registrar operations, and the broader technical community. Moderated by **Samvel Martirosyan** (CyberHUB-AM), the discussion brought together experts from government, law enforcement, academia, and the private sector.

Arshak Kerobyan from the Ministry of High-Tech Industry outlined the policy objectives behind the draft law, while **Hayk Mkrtchyan** of the Cybercrime Department highlighted law enforcement priorities and concerns. Legal perspectives were shared by a representative from ISAA, focusing on regulatory clarity and legal obligations for registrars.

David Alaverdyan emphasized the importance of cybersecurity education and capacity building.

Gevorg Hayrapetyan addressed potential risks to personal data protection, and **Aram Verdyan** shared insights on the operational challenges and technical impact the proposed legislation may pose for registrars and infrastructure providers.

The session underscored the need for inclusive dialogue to ensure that cybersecurity regulations support rather than hinder the sustainable growth of Armenia's domain space and digital ecosystem.

Addressing DNS abuse:
Effective response strategies and global best practices

The session led by **CleanDNS**, provided a comprehensive overview of the current state of DNS abuse and the strategies being developed to effectively respond to it. The discussion began with an exploration of the most prevalent types of abuse, notably phishing and ransomware.

Phishing continues to be the most common cyberattack in the UK, affecting a vast majority of businesses and charities, while ransomware remains the most impactful type of malware, with significant financial costs even when ransoms are not paid.

The presentation highlighted how recent legislation such as NIS2, the Digital Services Act (DSA), and the UK's Online Safety Act (2023) are placing increased responsibility on registries and registrars.

These regulations require timely responses to cybersecurity incidents, collaboration with authorities, and proactive tools for content moderation and user protection, particularly in safeguarding children online.

Beyond technical DNS abuse, the session emphasized the broader spectrum of online harms that may warrant action by internet infrastructure actors.

These include serious issues such as child protection, human trafficking, fake pharmaceuticals, threats of violence, and emerging fraud schemes linked to global events. The importance of appropriate response was underscored—while registries and registrars may have the capability to intervene, that does not always mean they are the right parties to do so.

CleanDNS introduced its principle of mitigation at the right level, advocating for the right action by the right party at the right time.

The role of evidence was central, with emphasis on verifying the purpose of domain registration, engaging trusted verifiers, and documenting processes for both manual and automated responses. Standardized reporting formats were encouraged to streamline information gathering and foster collaboration, while feedback to reporters was noted as essential for continued improvement.

Real-world abuse cases, including phishing domains and malware-hosting websites, were presented for group discussion.

Participants were invited to analyze the reports, consider whether the evidence was verifiable, and determine the most suitable actions to take. These simulations highlighted the practical challenges of abuse detection and response, reinforcing the need for informed decision-making and cooperation across the internet ecosystem.

In conclusion, the session advocated for a shift in how online harms are addressed. It called for clearer intervention thresholds, stronger engagement with hosting and service providers, and collaboration beyond just registries and registrars.

Regional best practices and regular peer discussions were encouraged to foster innovation and resilience. By building trust and taking a multi-stakeholder approach, the internet community can more effectively tackle abuse and create safer digital environments.

Effective Intellectual Property protection in the framework of the domain names, ccTLDs characteristics

The session titled "Effective Intellectual Property Protection in the Framework of Domain Names, ccTLDs Characteristics" explored the intersection of domain name regulation and intellectual property (IP) rights, with a focus on the unique context of country code top-level domains (ccTLDs).

Moderated by **Christina Gevorgyan**, the discussion brought together legal and policy experts to address current challenges and best practices in protecting trademarks and other IP assets online.

Arthur Varderesyan emphasized the importance of national legal mechanisms and effective dispute resolution processes for ccTLD-related conflicts.

Tony Kirsch joined online to share global trends and tools in brand protection, highlighting the role of initiatives like the Brand Safety Alliance.

Vanik Margaryan discussed the role of mediation in resolving domain disputes, promoting quicker and less adversarial outcomes.

Areg Hovhannisyan contributed insights on consumer protection, stressing the need for enforcement tools to address misleading or abusive domain registrations.

Overall, the session underlined the importance of harmonizing national and international approaches to IP protection in the domain space and the need for collaboration among regulatory bodies, legal professionals, and technical operators.

Web3 domain: how does it work?
Implementing blockchain technologies in .am zone

The presentation introduced the concept of **Web3 Domain Mirroring**, where traditional DNS domains like .am can be mirrored into the Web3 ecosystem without altering existing DNS settings. This allows domains to gain blockchain-enabled capabilities such as integration with decentralized apps (dApps), messaging, wallets, and smart contracts.

Powered by **Freename.io** and implemented through **WebUnited**, the technology gives registrars new tools and business opportunities, including revenue sharing and API integration. A live demo with GlobalR.com showcased how .am domains can enter the Web3 space.

The talk also highlighted renewed international interest in .am, positioning Armenia's ccTLD for global partnerships and innovation in decentralized internet technologies.

Strengthening the registry-to-registrar relationship: improving processes and collaboration.

The session focused on enhancing cooperation between domain name registries and registrars to ensure a more efficient and secure domain ecosystem.
Speakers discussed common challenges in communication, technical coordination, and policy implementation.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of trust, transparency, and standardized processes to streamline domain management and abuse response.
Participants shared best practices for improving workflow, data sharing, and dispute resolution, highlighting how stronger partnerships can lead to better service for end users and greater resilience against online threats.
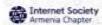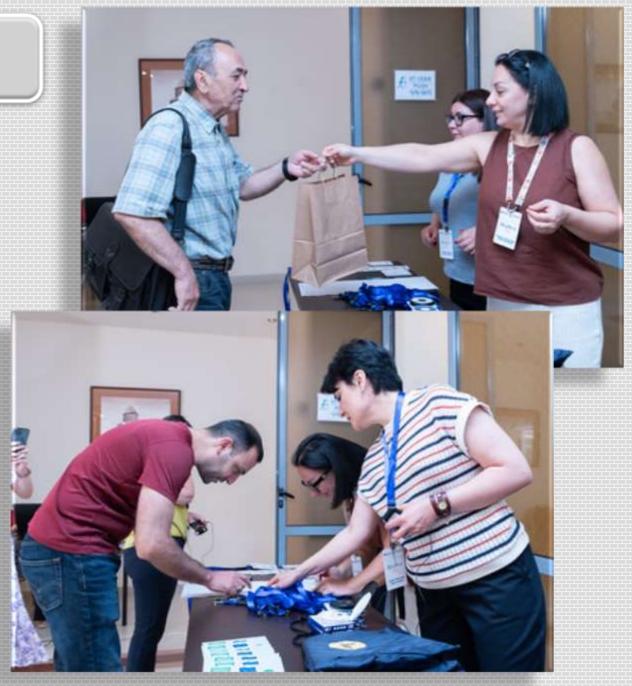
Q and A

Organizing team

Social media coverage

https://www.isoc.am/keeping-am-domain-secure-with-the-right-mechanisms/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dt6TVovUdlk

https://www.isocchapter.am/en/keeping-am-domain-secure-with-the-right-mechanisms/

Thank you!!!

- ➢ **To participants**
- ➢ **To speakers**
- ➢ **To organizers**
- ➢ **To sponsors**

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