

Release Management Group Report to UTC #187

April 15, 2026

Peter Constable & UTC Release Management Group

The Release Management Group (“RMG”) is composed of UTC working group leaders and other volunteers working on the process for development of the Unicode 18.0 release and for evolving processes for future Unicode Standard releases.

1. Unicode 18.0 timeline

A timeline for the development and release of Unicode 17.0 was proposed in [L2/25-234](#) and confirmed by UTC #181 (cf. [185-C39](#)). The following is a summary of key dates:

- 2026-03-31: End of alpha, snapshot of feedback
- 2026-04-23, UTC #187: Finalize beta content
- 2026-05-26: start of beta review
- 2026-07-07: end of beta public review, snapshot of feedback
- 2026-07-30, UTC #188: Finalize 18.0 content
- 2026-09-15: Unicode 18.0 release

2. Unicode 18.0 beta review

The 18.0 beta review period will begin roughly four weeks after UTC #187, on May 26. The RMG together with the Charts WG, CJK, EDC and PAG have begun preparing for this milestone. The beta deliverables will consist of:

- A complete draft of core spec;
- updated code charts;
- all data files;
- a PRI cover page; and
- a Unicode blog post.

RMG recommends the following UTC actions:

[187-C] Consensus: The UTC authorizes starting the beta review for Unicode 18.0.

[187-A] Action Item for Peter Constable, RMG: Coordinate the publication of the Unicode 18.0 beta review.

[187-A] Action Item for Ken Whistler, RMG: Prepare the Unicode 18.0 beta review landing page and linking text for a PRI page.

[187-A] Action Item for Michelle Perham, UTC: Post the PRI for the Unicode 18.0 beta review, to close July 7, 2026.

3. Recommended changes for 18.0

Unicode 18.0 needs to be synchronized with ISO/IEC 10646 7th edition, which is still in committee draft stage. SC2 will meet in June and will resolve CD3 comments; a DIS ballot will not be circulated before July (possibly after UTC #188), and would not close before Unicode 18.0 is released.

For that reason, we need to ensure that any details related to new content in Unicode 18.0 will not be at risk of a negative ballot response from any national bodies during the DIS ballot. Therefore, any potential issues will need to be resolved during the June SC2 and SC2/WG2 meetings.

In CD3 comments, there were concerns raised in comments from China and from India that affect some new content planned for Unicode 18.0. With those comments in mind, and anticipating the above need, changes should be incorporated into the Unicode 18.0 beta that we anticipate would resolve those national body concerns. In that way, we can lower the risk of churn needed after the SC2 meeting and after the beta review period.

The following is a summary of CD3 comments that require accommodation:

- Bangla characters U+0984 BENGALI SIGN COMBINING ANUSVARA ABOVE and U+09FF BENGALI LETTER SANSKRIT BA: there is concern with these being encoded in the Bengali block.
- U+1879 MONGOLIAN LETTER ALTERNATE UE: there is not yet consensus in SC2 for encoding this character.
- U+11B0A DEVANAGARI LETTER ALTERNATE DDDA: there is concern with creating an impression that this character is recommended for use in modern Sindhi content.
- (Small) Seal script characters, U+3D000..U+3FC3F: there is concern that the characters to be encoded are widely known as “Small Seal”, to be distinguished from other “Seal” forms, and that “Seal” is too broad.
- Title of UAX #60, “Data for Non Han Ideographic Scripts”: there is concern that scripts covered in that annex will include historic forms of Han ideographs, and hence that the current title is not appropriate.

With these in mind, RMG recommends the following UTC actions:

- For Bangla characters:

[187-C] Move the code point assignments for two Bengali characters, BENGALI SIGN COMBINING ANUSVARA ABOVE and BENGALI LETTER SANSKRIT BA from the currently approved code points, U+0984 and U+09FF, to U+11DF0 and U+11DF1 respectively, in a new block Bengali Supplement at U+11DF0..U+11DFF, for Unicode 18.0. [Ref. section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-C] Rename U+11DF1 BENGALI LETTER SANSKRIT BA to BENGALI LETTER ALTERNATE BARGIYA BA, for Unicode 18.0. [Ref. section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-A] Action Item for Jan Kučera, SEW: Update the Roadmap to add the Bengali Supplement block at U+11DF0..U+11DFF. [Ref 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-A] Action Item for Ken Whistler, RMG: Update the Pipeline to change the code point assignments from two new Bengali characters for Unicode 18.0 from U+0984, U+09FF to U+11DF0, U+11DF1, and a change of name for U+11DF1 to BENGALI LETTER ALTERNATE BARGIYA BA. [Ref 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-A] Action Item for Ken Whistler, PAG: Update code point assignments for new Bengali characters in NamesList.txt for Unicode 18.0 from U+0984, U+09FF to U+11DF0, U+11DF1, and change the name for U+11DF1 to BENGALI LETTER ALTERNATE BARGIYA BA. [Ref 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-A] Action Item for Michel Suignard, CHARTS: For Unicode 18.0, prepare a chart for a new block Bengali Supplement at U+11DF0..U+11DFF, and update code point assignments for new Bengali characters in code charts from U+0984, U+09FF to U+11DF0, U+11DF1. [Ref 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-A] Action Item for Robin Leroy, PAG: Update code point assignments for new Bengali characters in UCD for Unicode 18.0 from U+0984, U+09FF to U+11DF0, U+11DF1, and change the name for U+11DF1 to BENGALI LETTER ALTERNATE BARGIYA BA. [Ref 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

- For the Mongolian character:

[187-C] Revert approval of U+1879 MONGOLIAN LETTER ALTERNATE UE for Unicode 18.0, and set the status to provisionally assigned.

[187-A] Action Item for Ken Whistler, RMG: Update the Pipeline to reflect the change of status of U+1879 MONGOLIAN LETTER ALTERNATE UE. [Ref. 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-A] Action Item for Robin Leroy, PAG: Update Unicode 18.0 property data to reflect the change of status of U+1879 MONGOLIAN LETTER ALTERNATE UE. [Ref. 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

[187-A] Action Item for Michel Suignard, CHARTS: Update charts for Unicode 18.0 to reflect the change of status of U+1879 MONGOLIAN LETTER ALTERNATE UE. [Ref. 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

For the Devanagari character:

[187-A] Action Item for Ken Whistler, EDC: Add an annotation to U+11B0A DEVANAGARI LETTER ALTERNATE DDDA to reflect comments from Government of India, that the character is not recommended for usage in modern Sindhi content; for Unicode 18.0. [Ref. L2/26-102]

For DUAX #60:

[187-C] UTC approves the change of title for UAX #60 from “Data for Non Han Ideographic Scripts” to “Data for Large East Asian Scripts”, for Unicode 18.0.

[187-A] Action Item for Michel Suignard, SEW: Change the title of UAX #60 to “Data for Large East Asian Scripts”, for Unicode 18.0. [Ref. 187-Cx, section 3 of L2/26-102]

4. Changes to *Unicode Character Name Index* page

One informative component of the Unicode Standard has been a character name index. This was included in the print publication from version 2.0 through version 5.1; starting with version 5.2, an unversioned, online page has been provided: [Character Name Index](#).

Up to now, the index data has been included within UCD as a data file, Index.txt, and that file has been updated manually for each new version. That file has existed only for purposes of this name index, and has represented non-normative auxiliary information that is not core to the encoded character repertoire or any algorithm specifications. Also, the static HTML index page has needed to be generated from the Index.txt using custom tooling; this has been a task tracked by RMG in the task list for each release. Altogether, this paradigm for providing a name index represents a non-trivial amount of manual work each year that some volunteers would need to do.

Also, to keep the size of the print / web page manageable, the index has only ever included a partial listing of character names.

As described in L2/26-075, Robin Leroy has proposed that the static HTML index page be replaced by a dynamically generated report. In addition, he proposes that the data be derived directly from independently needed UCD data. This would provide various benefits, including a more comprehensive index and richer information. Most importantly, from an RMG perspective, it would provide the following key benefits for quality and sustainability of the Unicode Standard:

- Automated index generation from core UCD files will eliminate a significant amount of manual work to be done in each release cycle.
- Index generation from core UCD files will eliminate potential for errors or incompleteness in the generated information.

For these reasons, RMG strongly supports Robin's proposal.

A change to the informative name index page, by itself, can be considered editorial and not requiring a formal UTC decision. However, this change would also render the Index.txt UCD file unused and obsolete. Therefore, we also recommend the following UTC actions:

[187-C] UTC approves removal of the Index.txt data file from the Unicode Character Database data files, for Unicode 19.0.

[187-N] Note: The Unicode Character Database file Index.txt will be frozen in its current state, as deployed in Unicode Version 17.0, based on Section 4 of L2/26-102, and on L2/26-075, for Unicode Version 18.0.

[187-A] Action Item for Robin Leroy, PAG: implement removal of the Index.txt file from UCD, for Unicode Version 19.0. [Ref. 187-Cx, section 4 of L2/26-102, and L2/26-075]

[187-A] Action Item for Ken Whistler, RMG: Call out the freeze and planned removal of Index.txt from UCD in the Unicode 18.0 beta review background document and the Unicode 18.0 release notes. [Ref. 187-Cx, section 4 of L2/26-102, and L2/26-075]