Title: UTC Liaison Report from WG2 #62

Date: 2014-3-3
Source: Peter Constable, Unicode Liaison to WG2
Action: For review by UTC, Unicode officers

A WG2 meeting was held in San Jose, February 24 – 28, 2014. This document reports on select topics arising from this meeting that will be of interest for the Unicode Consortium.

For the complete WG2 resolutions, see L2/14-073 (= N4554).

Progress on ISO/IEC 10646 amendments and new editions

During WG2 #62, ballot comments were processed for the fourth edition (ISO/IEC DIS 10646:2014), and also for a draft of Amendment 1 of the fourth edition. Also, decisions were taken to limit the repertoire of Amendment 1 and to initiate work on Amendment 2.

Ballot comments on DIS text for the fourth edition were processed at this meeting. The most noteworthy changes to the fourth edition were to include 20BD RUBLE SIGN, and to include standardized variation sequences for Manichaean that had been overlooked when Manichaean proposals were adopted in 2011. The fourth edition is now stabilized and will go to the final, approval balloting stage.

Ballot comments on PDAM text for Amendment 1 to the fourth edition were processed at this meeting. Significant decisions were taken at this meeting regarding this amendment and its progression: Going into this meeting, the expectation had been that Amendment 1 would stay at the PDAM stage until after the following WG2 meeting. In order to accommodate certain more-urgent characters, notably the Cherokee additions, it was decided to separate scripts and characters (e.g., Tangut) requiring more time for technical review into a new Amendment 2, and to progress Amendment 1 with more urgently-needed characters on a quicker schedule. As a result, the editor will be preparing DAM text for balloting, with new target dates for this amendment as follows: DAM 2014-04, FDAM 2014-11.

As just mentioned, action was also taken to initiate work on Amendment 2 of the 4th edition. Much of the repertoire previously in Amendment 1 was moved to Amendment 2, and other new repertoire was added. Specific target dates for Amendment 2 have not yet been specified.

The key distinction to note between Amendment 1 and Amendment 2 is that Amendment 1 will likely be stabilized in time for inclusion in the 2015 release of The Unicode Standard, while the repertoire of Amendment 2 cannot be considered for that Unicode release.

The following is a tentative schedule for future WG2 meetings and potential timetable for progress on amendments and the 4th edition.

WG2 Meeting	4th Edition	4th Edn, Amd 1	4th Edn, Amd 2	5th Edn
February 2014 (US)	DIS disposition; authorize FDIS ballot	PDAM disposition completed; DAM authorized	Amd 2 initiated; project sub-division ballot and PDAM will be prepared after the meeting	n/a
September 2014 (Sri Lanka)	n/a	DAM ballot disposition; progress to FDAM ballot	PDAM ballot disposition; continue with 2nd PDAM, or progress to DAM (TBD)	??
Sept / Fall 2015	n/a	n/a	Possible: DAM ballot disposition and progression to FDAM	Probable: Work on 5th edition initiated at or before this meeting

Future sequencing of Unicode and SC2 work

In the liaison report submitted to WG2 (L2/14-071 = N4566), the move to a regular, annual publication schedule for The Unicode Standard was highlighted, along with potential implications for the work of SC2.

In particular, due to Unicode production schedules, the repertoire for a given year's version of Unicode will need to be stabilized by late January of that year. That means that, by mid-January, a draft new edition or amendment of 10646 would need to have passed its DIS / DAM ballot with ballot comments resolved in order to be considered for that year's Unicode release. It was suggested that WG2 might consider regularizing their schedule to have DIS/DAM ballot resolution meetings in the fall of any given year, or by mid-January of the following year at the latest, in order to synchronize with a Unicode release in the following year. Near-term WG2 plans appear to be generally aligning with this in that WG2 #63 is scheduled for September 2014 and WG2 #64 is tentatively scheduled for late summer or early fall of 2015.

Related to this, I continued to encourage WG2 to take an agile approach regarding committee drafts, allowing the project editor to incorporate changes into a committee draft when there is reasonable indication of consensus without prior face-to-face discussion in a WG2 meeting. If PDAM / CD drafts are developed and progressed in this manner based on outcomes in UTC meetings or in email discussions among WG2 experts, then it should be possible for WG2 to have a steady progression of work with annual face-to-face meetings each fall to resolve DAM / DIS ballot comments.

In the case of some scripts requiring deeper discussion among experts, it may be necessary to facilitate ad hoc discussion among WG2 experts between meetings. For instance, the ad hoc discussion of Siddham that took place during WG #62 or the expert meeting on Tangut facilitated by SEI are representative of kinds of interactions that might be needed between WG2 meetings in order to progress certain proposals. UTC might want to consider whether quarterly UTC meetings could be used toward this end. This may require finding ways to accommodate experts that do not normally attend

UTC meetings, getting them to participate in an expert meeting (face-to-face or otherwise) organized and facilitated by UTC.

Access to SC2 ballot documents

During WG2 #62, as mentioned above, there was discussion of ballot comments on the DIS ballot of the 4th edition. With the SC2 document register having migrated into the ISO online system, the DIS draft was not readily accessible to UTC or to the US delegation. This hindered our ability to discuss the ballot comments effectively. The general issue of access to SC2 documents has been discussed in UTC before.

Currently, Unicode has a liaison relationship to WG2, but not to SC2. This allows Unicode to access any WG2 documents (which, so for, are kept public regardless) and to contribute in an on-going way to the work of WG2. Since there is not a liaison relationship to SC2, however, there is no access to any SC2 documents that have restricted access. With an SC2 liaison relationship (specifically, a "Category A" liaison relationship), the Unicode Liaison representative would be granted access to SC2 documents. These could then be made available (with restricted access) to UTC members.

To that end, I have recommended to the Unicode officers that we request a Category A liaison relationship with SC2. This will require an SC2 ballot to be approved.