Statement by the ACM Executive Committee
On Holding the ACM SIGWEB Hypertext 2015 Conference in northern Cyprus
January 5, 2015

ACM has been questioned about the decision of ACM SIGWEB to hold the 2015 Hypertext conference at the Middle East Technical University Northern Cyprus Campus. The ACM Executive Committee offers the following perspective on this decision.

ACM is a large, international educational and scientific computing membership society. The activities of the ACM – conferences, publications, education, policy, and driving for broadened inclusion in our field – are defined and led by volunteers from around the world. In developing these activities, there are a set of principles that guide the ACM volunteer community. These principles include:

1. ACM activities shall foster the open interchange of information and promote the highest professional and ethical standards.

2. ACM activities shall not discriminate against individuals with respect to gender, race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or physical ability.

3. ACM activities shall not violate national or international laws.

Beyond these principles, what shapes ACM is the passion and hard work of its volunteers – volunteers who build technical communities (SIGs), organize technical meetings, and produce high-quality scholarly works. ACM expects and receives a lot from these volunteers. In return, ACM volunteers expect to be supported in carrying out their activities as they see fit. Among many other things, decisions concerning the leadership and location of conferences is devolved to the elected leadership of individual sponsoring SIGs as long as they do not violate the principles listed above.

The decision to hold Hypertext 2015 in northern Cyprus was taken by the leaders of SIGWEB in support of volunteers willing to organize the 2015 conference. As currently planned, the conference does not violate any core principles of ACM. In supporting SIGWEB's decision, ACM takes no position on, and makes no statement concerning, the legitimacy of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The ACM defers to organizations such as the United Nations on issues related to the legitimacy of governmental organizations. The current policy of the UN encourages the involvement of both local and international organizations in holding sporting, cultural, and educational events that can bring the communities in northern and southern Cyprus together (http://www.unficyp.org/).

While we understand the difficult political issues and sympathize with the deep feelings confronting our members in the region, the role of a volunteer-driven, professional and student membership society is to promote and support the individuals constituting our community, wherever they may live or work.