

## ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

NET Holding A.Ş. and Merit Turizm Yatırım ve İşletme A.Ş. v. Kozzle LTD, Kozzle LTD; Kerem Atak; Aitch Aitch; Abdulgafur Karaer; krono fitmo; Host Master, Njalla Okta LLC; and Naşide Işık  
Case No. D2025-3969

### 1. The Parties

The Complainants are NET Holding A.Ş., Türkiye, and Merit Turizm Yatırım ve İşletme A.Ş., Türkiye, represented by Sołtysiński Kawecki & Szlęzak, Poland.

The Respondents are Kozzle LTD, Kozzle LTD, Cyprus, represented by Boiko Yevhenii, Ukraine; Kerem Atak, Türkiye; Aitch Aitch, Türkiye; Abdulgafur Karaer, Türkiye, represented by Kostiantyn Zerov and Daria Tymchenko, Ukraine; krono fitmo, Germany; Host Master, Njalla Okta LLC, Saint Kitts and Nevis; and Naşide Işık, Türkiye.

### 2. The Domain Names and Registrars

The disputed domain name <meritking.co> is registered with NameSilo, LLC.

The disputed domain names <meritking.net>, <meritking.org>, and <meritkings.news> are registered with NameCheap, Inc.

The disputed domain name <meritkingnews.com> is registered with Tucows Domains Inc.

The disputed domain names <meritkingnews.net> and <meritkingnews.org> are registered with GoDaddy.com, LLC.

The disputed domain name <meritking1827.com> is registered with Atak Domain Hosting Internet ve Bilgi Teknolojileri Limited Sirketi d/b/a Atak Teknoloji.

The disputed domain name <meritking1828.com> is registered with Hosting Concepts B.V. d/b/a Registrar.eu. (altogether the "Registrars")

### 3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on September 29, 2025. On September 30, 2025, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrars requests for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain names. On September 30, October 1 and 2, 2025, the Registrars transmitted by email to the Center their verification responses disclosing registrants and contact information for the disputed domain names which differed from the named Respondents (Atak Domain / Redacted for Privacy / Redacted for Privacy, Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf / Registration Private, Domains By Proxy, LLC / The RDAP server redacted the value) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainants on October 6, 2025, with the registrant and contact information of nominally multiple underlying registrants revealed by the Registrars, requesting the Complainants to either file separate complaint(s) for the disputed domain names associated with different underlying registrants or alternatively, demonstrate that the underlying registrants are in fact the same entity and/or that all disputed domain names are under common control. The Complainants filed an amended Complaint on October 10, 2025.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on October 17, 2025. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was November 6, 2025. On November 3, 2025, the Respondent Kozzle LTD, Kozzle LTD requested an extension until November 20, 2025, to which the Complainant objected on November 4, 2025. On November 6, 2025, the Respondent Abdulgafur Karaer requested a four-day extension under paragraph 5(b) of the Rules. On November 6, 2025, the Center granted an extension to the Respondents until November 14, 2025. The Responses were filed with the Center by the Respondents Kozzle LTD, Kozzle LTD and Abdulgafur Karaer on November 14, 2025.

A different Panel was initially appointed on November 21, 2025, but thereafter recused itself. The Center appointed Ugur G. Yalçiner as the sole panelist in this matter on November 26, 2025. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

On November 26, 2025, the Complainants filed a supplemental filing. On December 2, 2025, the Panel issued Administrative Panel Procedural Order No. 1 whereby the Respondents were invited to comment on the Complainant’s supplemental filing of November 26, 2025, and the decision due date was extended accordingly. On December 8, 2025, the Respondents Kozzle LTD, Kozzle LTD and Abdulgafur Karaer separately submitted their responses to the Procedural Order No. 1.

### 4. Factual Background

The Complainants, Net Holding A.Ş. (the “Complainant 1”) and its subsidiary Merit Turizm Yatırım ve İşletme A.Ş. (the “Complainant 2”), are prominent Turkish joint stock companies active in the hospitality, casino, gaming and betting sectors across Türkiye, Cyprus, Montenegro, Croatia, and Bulgaria, operating under the trademark MERIT.

The Complainant 2 is the owner of several trademark registrations consisting of the terms MERIT and MERIT ROYAL (the “MERIT trademarks”), some of which are listed below:

- Turkish trademark registration MERIT INTERNATIONAL with registration No. 171909, registered on June 16, 1997 in classes 39, 41, and 42;
- Turkish trademark registration MERIT with registration No. 2006 10901, registered on April 25, 2007, in classes 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, and 29;
- Turkish trademark registration MERIT with registration No. 2018 119653, registered on February 8, 2021, in classes 3, 5, 8, 9, 20, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, and 45; and
- Turkish trademark registration MERIT ROYAL HOTEL CASINO SPA with registration No. 2012 97386, registered on September 9, 2015, in classes 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, and 45.

The Complainant 1 is the owner of European Union trademark registration MERIT ROYAL HOTEL&CASINO&SPA with registration No. 016172389, registered on May 24, 2017, in classes 9, 16, 21, 24, 28, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, and 43.

The disputed domain names <meritking.net> and <meritking.org> were registered on September 8, 2021 by the Respondent Abdulgafur Karaer (the “Respondent 1”), and according to the evidence submitted by the Complainants, they resolve to websites that are currently blocked, however, prior to being blocked, these websites were used to direct users to the active “meritking” gambling websites. The Panel visited the websites connected to the disputed domain names on December 12, 2025, and determined that the disputed domain names resolve to pages stating that access to the websites has been blocked pursuant to a decision of the Information Technologies and Communication Authority of Turkey (“ITCA”) dated November 29, 2021.

The disputed domain name <meritking.co> was registered on January 6, 2023 by the Respondent Kozzle LTD, Kozzle LTD (the “Respondent 2”), and according to the evidence submitted by the Complainants, it resolves to an active website that offers gambling and betting services under “meritking” brand. The Panel visited the website connected to the disputed domain name on December 12, 2025, and determined that the disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website when accessed from Türkiye.

The disputed domain name <meritking1827.com> was registered on May 26, 2025, by the Respondent Kerem Atak and according to the evidence submitted by the Complainants, it resolves to an active website that offers gambling and betting services under “meritking” brand. The Panel visited the website connected to the disputed domain name on December 12, 2025, and determined that the disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website.

The disputed domain name <meritking1828.com> was registered on May 3, 2025, by the Respondent Aitch Aitch and according to the evidence submitted by the Complainants, it is stated at the website connected to the other disputed domain name <meritking1827.com> that <meritking1828.com> will be used after <meritking1827.com>. The Panel visited the website connected to the disputed domain name on December 12, 2025, and determined that the disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website.

The disputed domain name <meritkings.news> was registered on September 14, 2024, by the Respondent krono fitmo, and according to the evidence submitted by the Complainants, prior to filing of the Complaint, it resolved to an active website that includes several links to current “meritking” gambling and betting websites. The Panel visited the website connected to the disputed domain name on December 12, 2025, and determined that it resolves to a default Plesk server page indicating that no website has been configured at this address.

The disputed domain name <meritkingnews.com> was registered on September 15, 2024, by the Respondent Host Master, Njalla Okta LLC and according to the evidence submitted by the Complainants, it resolves to website including advertisements for the “meritking” brand. The Panel visited the website connected to the disputed domain name on December 12, 2025, and determined that the disputed domain name resolves to a page stating that access to the websites has been blocked pursuant to a decision of ITCA dated November 7, 2024.

The disputed domain names <meritkingnews.net> and <meritkingnews.org> were registered on December 23, 2024, by the Respondent Naşide Işık and they resolve to active gambling websites offering slot and other betting services under the “meritking” brand.

## **5. Parties’ Contentions**

### **A. Complainants**

The Complainants contend that they have satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain names. The Complaint includes the following contentions:

The Complainants contend that they hold rights in a family of trademarks incorporating the MERIT element and that the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to these trademarks because they all reproduce the dominant term “merit”, while the additional term “king”, which has limited distinctiveness in the gambling and betting sector, evokes an association with the “royal” term used in several MERIT trademarks and does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity, as confirmed by prior panel decisions; this similarity is further reinforced by the Respondents’ pattern of systematically registering multiple “meritking” domain name variants to trade on the reputation of the MERIT trademarks and by the actual confusion evidenced by complaints from users who believe that the “meritking” gambling and betting websites are operated by the Complainants.

The Complainants submit that, in light of the clear indicia of bad faith, the second and third elements of the Policy should be assessed jointly and that they have established a prima facie case that the Respondents lack any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names. The Complainants further submit that, the disputed domain names are used to create confusion as to the origin of services offered under the “meritking” name and to free-ride on the reputation of the well-known MERIT trademarks, without any authorization from the Complainants. They submit that the Respondents were necessarily aware of the MERIT trademarks given their reputation, the long-standing disputes with related parties, and the fact that the Respondents target the Turkish market. The Complainants contend that the adoption of the “meritking” name followed unsuccessful attempts by related entities to use “meritroyal”, while users have reported serious irregularities and alleged fraud in connection with the “meritking” gambling and betting websites. UDRP panels have consistently held that the use of a domain name for illegal activity or fraud can never confer rights or legitimate interests, and these circumstances are further supported by the use of false or concealed registrant details and by a recent panel decision confirming that <meritking.news> was registered and used in bad faith without any rights or legitimate interests. See *Net Holding A.Ş., Merit Turizm Yatırım ve İşletme A.Ş. v. Abdulgafur Karaer*, WIPO Case No. [D2025-1954](#).

### **B. Respondents**

The Respondent 1 and 2 contend that the Complainant has not satisfied all three of the elements required under the Policy for transfer of the disputed domain names.

The Respondent 1 includes the following contentions:

The Respondent 1 submits that the first element of the Policy is a “low threshold” standing requirement and does not require proof of trademark infringement, and that where website content does not trade off a complainant’s reputation, panels may consider this relevant under the second and third elements. The Respondent 1 contends that it does not use or imitate the Complainants’ trademarks or visual identity, that the disputed domain names <meritking.net> and <meritking.org> are distinct and not confusingly similar to the Complainants’ trademarks, and that the associated website content does not trade off the Complainants’ reputation. The Respondent 1 further submits that the disputed domain names were registered for private purposes in anticipation of potential future activities and are used in a legitimate, noncommercial and fair manner, that “merit” is a dictionary term widely used by unrelated third parties and is neither distinctive nor uniquely associated with the Complainants, as further evidenced by multiple refusals of

the Complainants' trademark registrations and by the invalidation of certain of their trademarks due to non-use in various jurisdictions. The Respondent 1 also contends that the Complainants hold no rights in the term "king", that the combination "meritking" was deliberately chosen to create a distinctive term, that the Parties are not competitors, that the disputed domain names <meritking.net> and <meritking.org> were not registered to disrupt the Complainants' business or offered for sale, that no business activity is conducted on these disputed domain names beyond landing pages, that there is no affiliation with third parties as alleged, and that the disputed domain names were not registered or used with intent to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainants' trademarks.

The Respondent 2 includes the following contentions:

The Respondent 2 submits that the disputed domain name is not identical or confusingly similar to the Complainants' trademarks, as the only common term "merit" is a commonly used dictionary term with a descriptive meaning and is widely used by numerous unrelated entities in trademarks worldwide, while the additional term "king" is an unusual and distinct word which adds distinctiveness to the disputed domain name, rendering any claim to exclusive rights in the term "meritking" unfounded. The Respondent 2 further submits that it has not used or imitated the Complainants' trademarks, logos, style, or any other elements of their visual identity. The Respondent 2 also submits that it is a duly incorporated company in Cyprus, operating as a legitimate business in good faith and without disrupting the Complainants' business, and notes that the Complainants do not appear to operate online but rather within their hotels, which eliminates any likelihood of confusion. The Respondent 2 contends that rights or legitimate interests should be assessed as of the time of filing of the Complaint, and that it owns and actively uses a registered trademark corresponding to the disputed domain name, namely a registered trademark in Georgia No. 40387 for MK MERIT KING, covering gambling and casino services, which is displayed on the Respondent's 2 website and demonstrates that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name and has rights and legitimate interests therein. The Respondent 2 further argues that, as the owner of the relevant trademark, it cannot be found to have registered or used the disputed domain name in bad faith, that the Complainants have failed to prove any intent to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating confusion, and that the requirements of bad faith registration and use under the third element of the Policy have not been satisfied.

### **C. Complainants' Supplemental Filing**

In their supplemental filing, the Complainants submit that the Supplemental Filing should be admitted, as the Responses raised arguments that could not reasonably have been anticipated at the time of filing the Complaint, including claims that the disputed domain names operate independently and objections to consolidation, as well as the Respondent 2's reliance on a Georgian trademark filed after the Complaint. The Complainants contend that the Respondents' request to split the proceeding is manifestly unfounded, since the facts demonstrate common control over all disputed domain names, which form part of a deliberate strategy to fragment formal ownership in order to obstruct enforcement. In support, the Complainants point to multiple overlapping links between the entities involved, including shared addresses, employment relationships, common branding, identical website content and layouts, systematic redirection to changing domain names, and prior findings that certain "news" websites were façade portals used to advertise "meritking" gambling and betting services. The Complainants further submit that the Respondent 1 has previously provided misleading information to UDRP panels, that the temporary blocking of certain websites does not cure bad faith and in fact reinforces it, and that all disputed domain names follow the same naming pattern and serve the same gambling and betting activity. The Complainants also reject the Respondents' reliance on the dictionary meaning of "merit", noting that this argument was already dismissed in a prior UDRP decision, and emphasize that their MERIT trademarks are validly registered and used in key jurisdictions targeted by the Respondents, including Türkiye and the European Union. Finally, the Complainants argue that the Respondent 2's Georgian trademark No. 40387 for MK MERIT KING was filed only days after notice of the present proceeding and decades after the Complainants' earlier trademarks, in a jurisdiction unrelated to the primary target market, and therefore constitutes a pretextual filing incapable of conferring rights or legitimate interests, with the result that the Respondents' submissions fail to rebut the

Complaint and consolidation remains fair and equitable, warranting transfer of all disputed domain names to the Complainants.

#### **D. Respondents' Supplemental Filings**

In its supplemental filing, the Respondent 1 alleges that the Complainants' Supplemental Filing contains no new or material information and should therefore be rejected. The Respondent 1 contends that the Complainants have failed to prove any relationship between themselves or any connection between the Respondent 1 and disputed domain names other than <meritking.net> and <meritking.org>, and that the prior UDRP case concerning <meritking.news> (*Net Holding A.Ş., Merit Turizm Yatırım ve İşletme A.Ş. v. Abdulgafur Karaer*, WIPO Case No. [D2025-1954](#)) is irrelevant as it related to a different subject matter. The Respondent 1 further submits that all relevant arguments have already been addressed in its Response and that, in the absence of evidence of common control, consolidation would be unfair and prejudicial.

In its supplemental filing, the Respondent 2 submits that the Complainants' Supplemental Filing should be disregarded as it contains no new or material information and merely repeats arguments already raised in the Complaint, while improperly attempting to remedy deficiencies in the consolidation request. The Respondent 2 contends that no evidence has been provided to establish any common control or affiliation between the Respondent and the other disputed domain names or registrants, denies any connection with third-party domain names and websites, and submits that alleged similarities in naming, addresses, or redirections are speculative and unsupported. The Respondent further maintains that it has a bona fide intent to use the disputed domain name <meritking.co> for a legitimate business, that the generic nature of the word "merit" and the Respondent's trademark registration in Georgia No. 40387 for MK MERIT KING support its rights and legitimate interests, and that the Complainants have failed to establish bad faith registration or use.

### **6. Discussion and Findings**

#### **6.1. Consolidation: Multiple Respondents**

The amended Complaint was filed in relation to nominally different domain name registrants. The Complainants allege that the domain name registrants are the same entity or mere alter egos of each other, or under common control. The Complainants request the consolidation of the Complaint against the multiple disputed domain name registrants pursuant to paragraph 10(e) of the Rules.

The Respondent 1 states that he is the registrant only of the disputed domain names <meritking.net> and <meritking.org>, denies any connection with the other disputed domain names or their registrants cited in the Complaint, and requests that the proceeding be split so as to concern only these two disputed domain names.

The Respondent 2 states that it is the registrant only of the disputed domain name <meritking.co>, denies any connection or affiliation with the other disputed domain names or their registrants, and objects to consolidation. The Respondent 2 submits that the Complainants fail to establish common control relying on speculative and irrelevant assertions, and therefore requests that the Complaint be dismissed or split into separate proceedings.

Other disputed domain name registrants did not comment on the Complainants' request.

Paragraph 3(c) of the Rules states that a complaint may relate to more than one domain name, provided that the domain names are registered by the same domain name holder.

In addressing the Complainant's request, the Panel will consider whether (i) the disputed domain names or corresponding websites are subject to common control; and (ii) the consolidation would be fair and equitable to all Parties. See WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Selected UDRP Questions, Third Edition (["WIPO Overview 3.0"](#)), section 4.11.2.

As regards common control, the Panel finds that the evidence demonstrates multiple objective links between the disputed domain names. Several of the domain names share identical contact email addresses, while others resolve to websites displaying the same or substantially similar content, branding, and use of the trademark relied upon by the Respondent 2. The Panel further notes that certain websites explicitly direct users to other "meritking" domain names as the "next address", and that other disputed domain names provide direct access links to "meritking" gambling and betting websites. The disputed domain names incorporate the terms "meritking" or "meritkingnews" and have been used either to offer gambling and betting services or to promote or redirect users to such services.

Based on the evidence submitted by the Complainants, the Panel notes that Meritking News Media Company Ltd and the Respondent 2 share the same registered address, that the Respondent 1 was previously identified in a UDRP proceeding as an employee of Meritking News Media Company Ltd, and that some "meritking" gambling and betting websites identify Exlogix Ltd. as the service provider, supporting a finding of coordinated activity under common control.

As regards fairness and equity, the Panel sees no reason why consolidation of the disputes would be unfair or inequitable to any Party and considers that consolidation promotes procedural efficiency and avoids inconsistent outcomes.

Accordingly, the Panel decides to consolidate the disputes regarding the nominally different disputed domain name registrants (referred to below as "the Respondent") in a single proceeding.

## **6.2. Consideration of Supplemental Filings**

The Panel notes that the Complainants submitted a supplemental filing on November 26, 2025. Pursuant to section 4.6 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), the admission of supplemental filings is within the Panel's discretion. In the present case, the Panel considers that certain aspects of the Complainants' supplemental filing respond directly to arguments raised by the Respondent which could not reasonably have been anticipated at the time of filing the Complaint, in particular the Respondent's objections concerning consolidation and reliance on its trademark registration in Georgia. While some of these matters could, in principle, have been raised in the Complaint, the Panel finds that they were advanced in direct response to the Respondent's specific arguments, and the Respondent was afforded an opportunity to comment in reply. As the admission of these filings has not delayed the proceeding and assists the Panel in assessing the Parties' positions, the Panel admits and considers the supplemental filings in reaching its Decision.

## **6.3. Other Legal Proceedings**

The Panel notes that the Complainants have referred to various civil and criminal proceedings and investigations in Türkiye and other jurisdictions relating to the use of the "meritking" name and alleged trademark infringement, unfair competition, and the advertisement of illegal gambling and betting services. The Panel expressly notes that the parties involved in those proceedings do not fully overlap with the Respondent in the present administrative proceeding, and that such references are provided solely as contextual background.

Pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Rules and section 4.14 of the [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), the existence of parallel court proceedings, whether involving the same parties or not, does not prevent the Panel from proceeding to a decision under the Policy. The Panel considers that claims seeking to block access to websites, determine trademark infringement, or impose criminal liability are legally and procedurally distinct from a request for the transfer of the disputed domain names under the Policy.

In these circumstances, the Panel finds no basis to suspend or terminate this administrative proceeding and therefore proceeds to render a decision under the Policy, without prejudice to any past, pending, or future court or criminal proceedings involving the Parties or third persons.

#### **6.4. Substantive Proceedings**

In accordance with paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant must prove that each of the three elements are present:

- (i) the disputed domain names registered by the Respondent are identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainants have rights; and
- (ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain names; and
- (iii) the disputed domain names have been registered and are being used in bad faith.

#### **A. Identical or Confusingly Similar**

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain names. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7.

The Complainants have shown rights in respect of a trademark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.2.1. The Panel is satisfied that the Complainants are the owner of the MERIT and MERIT ROYAL trademarks registered around the world.

The disputed domain names incorporate the MERIT trademarks of the Complainants together with the additional term “king”, or the terms “king” and “news”. Accordingly, the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to the marks for the purposes of the Policy referring to [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.7. In this regard, the Panel considers mere addition of the terms “king” or “kingnews” do not avoid the confusing similarity with the Complainant's trademarks. (See also [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.8 and the cases cited therein, finding that where the relevant trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name, the addition of other terms (whether descriptive, geographical, pejorative, meaningless, or otherwise) would not prevent a finding of confusing similarity under the first element.)

It is an accepted principle that Top-Level Domains (“TLDs”), in this case “.com”, “.co”, “.net”, “.news”, “.org”, are to be typically disregarded in the consideration of the issue of whether a domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a Complainant's trademark. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 1.11.

In the light of the above, the Panel finds that the disputed domain names are confusingly similar to the Complainant's registered trademarks and that the requirements in paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy are fulfilled

#### **B. Rights or Legitimate Interests**

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of “proving a negative”, requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant



evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds that the Complainants have established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names. The Respondents who did not submit any Response, have not rebutted the Complainants' prima facie showing and have not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names <meritking1827.com>, <meritking1828.com>, <meritkings.news>, <meritkingnews.com>, <meritkingnews.net>, and <meritkingnews.org>, such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

The Panel has considered the Respondent 1's reliance on the alleged dictionary meaning and non-exclusive nature of the term "merit". The Panel recalls that, under [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 2.10.1, such reliance requires genuine use, or demonstrable preparations for use, corresponding to that meaning and not targeting a complainant's trademark. In the present case, the Respondent has failed to provide any credible evidence of such use or preparations. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Respondent 1 has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names <meritking.net> and <meritking.org>.

The Panel has considered the Respondent 2's reliance on its corporate existence and on its ownership of a trademark registration for MK MERIT KING in Georgia. The Panel notes that the mere existence of a company or the holding of a trademark does not by itself establish rights or legitimate interests under the Policy, particularly where, as in the present case, the trademark application was filed after the filing of the Complaint and following notification of the proceeding to the Parties. Moreover, the Respondent has not shown that such trademark has been used independently of the Complainants' trademarks. Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Respondent 2 has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names.

The Panel notes that the Respondent does not hold any prior registered trademarks or trade names, and that no license or authorization of any kind has been granted to the Respondent by the Complainants to use their registered trademarks. On the contrary, as evidenced by the Complainants' assertions and supporting documents, the disputed domain names have been used either to offer gambling and betting services or to promote or redirect users to such services, which are commonly offered as part of, or in close association with, the Complainants' hotel and resort accommodation services, thereby creating a likelihood of confusion, taking unfair advantage of, and potentially tarnishing the Complainants' trademarks.

As a result, the Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names, and the requirements of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy are therefore fulfilled by the Complainants.

### **C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith**

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

In the present case, the Panel is satisfied with the relevant evidence filed by the Complainant showing that it owns trademark rights for MERIT and MERIT ROYAL, which have been registered and used for many years prior to the registration of the disputed domain names. In light of the distinctiveness and long-standing use of the MERIT mark in the hotel, resort, and casino field, the Panel finds it implausible that the Respondent registered the disputed domain names without knowledge of the Complainants and their trademarks. This conclusion is further reinforced with respect to the Respondent 1, who was previously involved in a UDRP proceeding concerning a domain name incorporating the Complainants' trademark, and was therefore clearly aware of the Complainants and their rights at the time of registration of the disputed domain names <meritking.net> and <meritking.org>.

The Panel also observes that the disputed domain names are in different states. The disputed domain names <meritking.net>, <meritking.org>, and <meritkingnews.net> have been subject to access blocking decisions in Türkiye issued by ITCA. The disputed domain name <meritking.co> remains technically active but is inaccessible from Türkiye due to the prohibition of gambling and betting services under Turkish law, while other disputed domain names, such as <meritking1827.com>, <meritking1828.com>, and <meritkings.news>, are currently inactive. The disputed domain names <meritkingnews.net> and <meritkingnews.org> remain active and accessible from Türkiye, as they do not directly offer gambling and betting services but instead promote or advertise such services under the “meritking” brand. The Panel finds that none of these circumstances negates a finding of bad faith. On the contrary, the prior active use of the disputed domain names for gambling-related services, the subsequent regulatory blocking, and the passive holding of certain disputed domain names, when assessed together with the distinctiveness of the MERIT mark, the absence of any rights or legitimate interests, and the registration of multiple domain names incorporating the Complainants’ trademarks, confirm a pattern of abusive registration and use.

The Panel further notes that the Respondent 2 filed a trademark application only after notification of the present UDRP proceeding. The Panel finds that such a post-notification filing does not negate bad faith and instead supports the conclusion that the trademark application was made in anticipation of this dispute and does not confer any legitimacy on the Respondent 2’s conduct.

The Panel also observes that the claimed trademark is used on the websites associated with the disputed domain names <meritking.co>, <meritking.net>, and <meritking1827.com>. In addition, the website associated with the disputed domain name <meritking1827.com> expressly refers to <meritking1828.com> as a subsequent address. The Panel further notes the Complainants’ unrebutted claims that the disputed domain names <meritking.net>, <meritking.org>, and <meritkings.news> function as entry points providing direct access links to “meritking” gambling and betting websites, while the disputed domain names <meritkingnews.net> and <meritkingnews.org> are used to promote and advertise such services. Taken together, these circumstances demonstrate that the disputed domain names are interconnected and operate in a coordinated manner as part of a single scheme, notwithstanding that they are registered in the names of different registrants.

The Panel finds that such coordinated use has no plausible legitimate explanation and is intended to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainants’ trademarks. Accordingly, the Panel concludes that the disputed domain names were registered and are being used in bad faith within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy.

Having considered all the facts in this case, the Panel finds that the Complainant has sustained its burden of proof in showing that the disputed domain names were registered and is being used in bad faith.

## 7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain names <meritking.co>, <meritking.net>, <meritkingnews.com>, <meritkingnews.net>, <meritkingnews.org>, <meritking.org>, <meritkings.news>, <meritking1827.com>, and <meritking1828.com> be transferred to the Complainants.

*/Ugur G. Yalçiner/*

**Ugur G. Yalçiner**

Sole Panelist

Date: December 25, 2025