



United Nations

Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

New York, 21-30 August 2007

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
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Note

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Chapter I

Organization of the work of the Conference

A. Terms of reference

1. The Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 21 to 30 August 2007, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2003/294 of 24 July 2003.

B. Opening of the Conference

2. The Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat opened the Conference and made a statement.

C. Attendance

3. The Conference was attended by representatives of 90 States Members, 1 non-Member State of the United Nations and 1 entity represented by an observer, 2 specialized agencies, 1 regional commission, 4 international scientific organizations and 5 observers.¹

D. Election of the President

4. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August 2007, the Conference elected, by acclamation, as President of the Conference, Mrs. Helen Kerfoot (Canada), who gave a welcoming address.

5. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

6. Also at the 1st plenary meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Norway, Latvia and France.

E. Organizational matters

1. Adoption of the rules of procedure

7. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August 2007, the Conference adopted the provisional rules of procedure.²

¹ The list of participants, as contained in document E/CONF.98/INF/4, is available on the website of the Ninth Conference at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgn.htm>.

² The rules of procedure, as contained in document E/CONF.98/135, are available on the website of the Ninth Conference at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgn.htm>.

2. Adoption of the agenda

8. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August, the Conference adopted the provisional agenda (E/CONF.98/1). The Conference also had before it the annotations to the provisional agenda (E/CONF.98/INF/2, in English only). The agenda as adopted was as follows:

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President of the Conference.
3. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the rules of procedure;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Election of officers other than the President;
 - (d) Organization of work;
 - (e) Credentials of representatives to the Conference.
4. Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference.
5. Reports by divisions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the situation in their divisions and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference.
6. Meetings and conferences:
 - (a) United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names;
 - (b) Divisional and interdivisional meetings and programmes;
 - (c) National names meetings, conferences and symposiums;
 - (d) International names meetings, conferences and symposiums.
7. Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names.
8. Economic and social benefits of the national and international standardization of geographical names.
9. National standardization:
 - (a) Field collection of names;
 - (b) Office treatment of names;
 - (c) Treatment of names in multilingual areas;
 - (d) Administrative structure of national names authorities;
 - (e) Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
10. Exonyms.
11. Reports on programmes to assist with pronunciation of names.

12. Toponymic data files:
 - (a) Data-collection procedures;
 - (b) Data elements required;
 - (c) Toponymic data transfer standards and formats;
 - (d) Automated data-processing systems;
 - (e) Compatibility and structure of systems;
 - (f) National gazetteers;
 - (g) Other publications.
13. Toponymic websites.
14. Terminology in the standardization of geographical names.
15. Features beyond a single sovereignty:
 - (a) Policies, procedures and cooperative arrangements;
 - (b) Features common to two or more nations.
16. Writing systems:
 - (a) Romanization;
 - (b) Conversion into non-Roman writing systems;
 - (c) Writing of names in unwritten languages.
17. Toponymic education and practice and international cooperation:
 - (a) Existing education and practice;
 - (b) Training courses in toponymy;
 - (c) Exchange of advice and information;
 - (d) Exchange of personnel;
 - (e) Technical assistance;
 - (f) Cooperation with national organizations;
 - (g) Cooperation with international organizations;
 - (h) Cooperation with public information media.
18. Country names.
19. Arrangements for the Tenth Conference.
20. Adoption of the report of the Conference.
21. Adoption of resolutions drafted during the Conference.
22. Closing of the Conference.

3. Election of officers other than the President

9. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August, the Conference elected the following officers:

Vice-Presidents:

Mr. Brian Goodchild (Australia)
Mr. Luís Abrahamo (Mozambique)

Rapporteur:

Ms. Caroline Burgess (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), assisted by Mr. Leif Nilsson (Sweden)

Editor-in-Chief:

Mr. Paul Woodman, (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), assisted by Mr. Brahim Atoui (Algeria), Mr. Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig (Ireland), Mr. Vladimir Boginski (Russian Federation) and Ms. Susana Rodríguez-Ramos (Mexico)

4. Organization of work

10. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August, the Conference approved its proposed organization of work (E/CONF.98/INF/3, in English only) and established four technical committees. The Conference also elected the officers and allocated agenda items to the technical committees as follows:

Technical Committee I

Chairman:

Mr. David Munro (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Rudolf Matindas (Indonesia)

Rapporteur:

Mr. William Watt (Australia), assisted by Ms. Isolde Hausner (Austria)

National standardization (item 9 and sub-items (a)-(e))

Technical Committee II

Chairman:

Mr. Joern Sievers (Germany)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Saif Al Qaydi (United Arab Emirates)

Rapporteur:

Mr. Trent Palmer (United States of America), assisted by Ms. Wendy Shaw (New Zealand)

Toponymic data files (item 12 and sub-items (a)-(g))

Toponymic websites (item 13)

Technical Committee III

Chairman:

Mr. Leo Dillon (United States of America)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Peter Jordan (Austria)

Rapporteur:

Mr. Peter Vichnicki (United States of America), assisted by Mr. Peeter Päll (Estonia)

Exonyms (item 10)

Reports on programmes to assist with pronunciation of names (item 11)

Writing systems (item 16 and sub-items (a)-(c))

Country names (item 18)

*Technical Committee IV**Chairman:*

Mr. Ferjan Ormeling (Netherlands)

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Botolv Helleland (Norway)

Rapporteur:

Ms. Catherine Cheetham (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), assisted by Mr. Truman Kubheka (South Africa)

Terminology in the standardization of geographical names (item 14)

Features beyond a single sovereignty (item 15 and sub-items (a) and (b))

Toponymic education and practice and international cooperation (item 17 and sub-items (a)-(h))

11. Agenda items 1 through 8 and 19 through 22 were considered in plenary meetings.

5. Credentials of representatives to the Conference

12. At the 1st plenary meeting, on 21 August, the Conference agreed, in accordance with rule 3 of the rules of procedure, that the Credentials Committee would be composed of the President, the two Vice-Presidents, the Rapporteur and a representative of the United Nations Statistics Division. It also decided that the Credentials Committee would examine the credentials of representatives and report to the plenary without delay.

13. At its 8th plenary meeting, on 29 August, the Credentials Committee reported that the credentials of the representatives had been found to be in order.

F. Documentation

14. The list of documents before the Conference, as contained in document E/CONF.98/INF/5, is available on the website of the Ninth Conference.³

³ <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgn.htm>.

Chapter II

Summary of the work of the Conference

A. Plenary meetings

15. At the 1st meeting, on 21 August 2007, the President drew the attention of the Conference to former members of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names who had passed away since the Eighth Conference. These included Mr. André Pégurier and Mr. Jean Ramondou, both of France, and Ms. Zinta Goba of Latvia.

Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference (item 4)

16. The Conference considered item 4 of its agenda at its 3rd meeting, on 23 August 2007. A concise thematic synthesis of the reports that came under this agenda item (E/CONF.98/CRP.69) was presented by the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on behalf of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). General themes of the various country reports were described. Many countries had included information on national names authorities, toponymic legislation, writing systems, and toponymic databases and gazetteers. A number had reported on cultural heritage, minority and indigenous names and commemorative naming. Other subjects included toponymy at the subnational level, maritime names, and the relationship of toponymic activities to mapping programmes, as well as both regional and international approaches to toponymy.

17. This synthesis had been compiled in view of the large number of country reports received by the Secretariat. The Conference agreed that this had been a useful exercise and that it would use the paper as an example for future syntheses. Representatives were encouraged to continue to submit papers on geographical names activities in their countries to future conferences. All papers were distributed, although not individually presented.

18. Reports had been submitted by the following countries: Israel (E/CONF.98/7 and Add.1); Russian Federation (E/CONF.98/12 and Add.1); Netherlands (E/CONF.98/17 and Add.1); Australia (E/CONF.98/21 and Add.1); Islamic Republic of Iran (E/CONF.98/23 and Add.1); Turkey (E/CONF.98/29 and Add.1); Austria (E/CONF.98/37 and Add.1); Italy (E/CONF.98/43 and Add.1); Japan (E/CONF.98/45); United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (E/CONF.98/48 and Add.1); Sweden (E/CONF.98/56 and Add.1); Indonesia (E/CONF.98/67 and Add.1); Hungary (E/CONF.98/88 and Add.1); Lithuania (E/CONF.98/90 and Add.1); Germany (E/CONF.98/91 and Add.1); Croatia (E/CONF.98/95 and Add.1); Brazil (E/CONF.98/96 and Add.1); Canada (E/CONF.98/101 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR); Jamaica (E/CONF.98/118 and Add.1); Belarus (E/CONF.98/119 and Add.1); Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (E/CONF.98/128); Finland (E/CONF.98/132 and Add.1); Latvia (E/CONF.98/134 and Add.1); Estonia (E/CONF.98/CRP.1); Belgium (E/CONF.98/CRP.6/EN and CRP.6/FR); United States of America (E/CONF.98/CRP.8); Spain (E/CONF.98/CRP.10 and CRP.10/EN (summary)); New Zealand (E/CONF.98/CRP.17); Ukraine (E/CONF.98/CRP.24/EN and CRP.24/RUS);

Sri Lanka (E/CONF.98/CRP.27); Brunei Darussalam (E/CONF.98/CRP.28); Lebanon (E/CONF.98/CRP.31); Denmark (E/CONF.98/CRP.35); Republic of Korea (E/CONF.98/CRP.41 and CRP.61); Ireland (E/CONF.98/CRP.50); Czech Republic (E/CONF.98/CRP.56); Viet Nam (E/CONF.98/CRP.63); Burkina Faso (E/CONF.98/CRP.65); Cuba (E/CONF.98/CRP.70); Bulgaria (E/CONF.98/CRP.72); Pakistan (E/CONF.98/CRP.73); Romania (E/CONF.98/CRP.75/EN and CRP.75/FR); Thailand (E/CONF.98/CRP.78); Morocco (E/CONF.98/CRP.79); Sudan (E/CONF.98/CRP.80); Syrian Arab Republic (E/CONF.98/CRP.85/EN and CRP.85/AR); Uruguay (E/CONF.98/CRP.86).

Reports by divisions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the situation in their divisions and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Eighth Conference (item 5)

19. The Conference considered item 5 of its agenda at its 5th meeting, on 27 August 2007. A concise overview and synthesis of the information contained in the reports submitted under this agenda item including the historical background on the creation of the divisions (E/CONF.98/CRP.89) was presented by the representative of Norway on behalf of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. The divisional reports had been approached in various ways, with differing lengths and structure. The representative of Norway quoted examples of the activities of the divisions, including meetings, training courses, publications, the promotion of endonyms, website development, work on romanization systems and the preservation of names as part of cultural heritage.

20. Division Chairs were encouraged to support the active participation of their members and to continue to prepare reports on collective activities. The Conference agreed that such an overview had been useful and would use the paper as an example for future syntheses. All divisional reports were distributed, although not individually presented. Reports had been submitted by: Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division (E/CONF.98/14 and Add.1); Romano-Hellenic Division (E/CONF.98/44); China Division (E/CONF.98/62 and Add.1); Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division (E/CONF.98/68); Norden Division (E/CONF.98/75 and Add.1); United States of America-Canada Division (E/CONF.98/94 and Add.1); French-speaking Division (E/CONF.98/114); Africa South Division (E/CONF.98/129 and Add.1); Baltic Division (E/CONF.98/130 and Add.1); Dutch- and German-speaking Division (E/CONF.98/CRP.20); Arabic Division (E/CONF.98/CRP.37/EN and CRP.37/AR); Asia East Division (other than China) (E/CONF.98/CRP.44); East Central and South-East Europe Division (E/CONF.98/CRP.64); East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic) (E/CONF.98/CRP.82); Latin America Division (E/CONF.98/CRP.83).

Meetings and conferences (item 6)

21. The Conference considered item 6 of its agenda, sub-items (a) through (d), at its 1st meeting, on 21 August 2007.

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (item 6 (a))

22. The Chairperson of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (Canada) presented a report on the meetings and work of the Group of Experts in the period since the Eighth Conference (E/CONF.98/CRP.19). The level

of participation in the sessions of UNGEGN had been encouraging and the programmes had included a number of special presentations. The UNGEGN website had been developed and the Chair thanked the United Nations Map Library for scanning previous Conference and UNGEGN documents for posting online. The Conference acknowledged the creation of the Portuguese-speaking Division during the twenty-fourth session of the Group of Experts.

Divisional and interdivisional meetings and programmes (item 6 (b))

23. The Chairperson of UNGEGN (Canada) reported verbally that a large number of divisional and working group meetings had been held, many as joint sessions or accompanying toponymic training courses or other conferences.

National names meetings, conferences and symposiums (item 6 (c))

24. The representative of Brazil described the Fourth National Conference on Geography and Cartography which had been held in Rio de Janeiro in August 2006 (E/CONF.98/99 and Add.1) during which round-table events had taken place where national standardization of geographical names was discussed. The creation of the Portuguese-speaking division of UNGEGN had been supported by participants at these meetings, as well as by attendees of the First Conference on Portuguese Translation held in Caparica, Portugal in September 2006. The representative of Mozambique expressed his appreciation that this new Division had been formed and welcomed the opportunities it would present for Portuguese-speaking countries.

25. The representative of the United States of America reported on the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (E/CONF.98/CRP.7). Since 1998, the Council had included members from all States, Commonwealths and Territories of the United States, and the federal Government. Items addressed during the annual meetings included national standardization, cooperation, and toponymic workshops. International participation in the conference, to be held in Lexington, Kentucky, in October 2007, was encouraged.

International names meetings, conferences and symposiums (item 6 (d))

26. The representative of the Russian Federation reported on activities of the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Inter-State Council for Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Remote Control of the Earth of the Commonwealth of Independent States (E/CONF.98/15 and Add.1). Six meetings had been held since its creation in 1996. Changes in geographical names in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States had been recorded in an information bulletin (with three supplements) which was available from the Federal Agency for Geodesy and Cartography of the Russian Federation.

27. A progress report of the Task Team on Africa was presented by its Chairman (Algeria) (E/CONF.98/16 and Add.1). The UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy had assisted in the organization of a course in Tunisia, supported by UNGEGN, the African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing, the Regional Remote Sensing Centre for the North African States and the Tunisian National Remote Sensing Centre. A geographical names session had been held during the fifth session of the Committee on Development Information in Addis Ababa, 29 April-4 May 2007. The agenda for the thirty-first Congress of the International Geographical Union, to be held in Tunis in August 2008, would

include items on geographical names. Interest had been expressed in holding the next session of UNGEGN in Africa with collaboration between the Economic Commission for Africa and the Group of Experts.

28. The representative of Austria announced that the twenty-third International Congress of Onomastic Sciences would be held in Toronto, Canada, in August 2008 (see E/CONF.98/33). The proceedings of the twenty-first Congress, Uppsala, Sweden, 2002, would be published in five volumes. New Board members had been elected during the twenty-second Congress held in Pisa, Italy, in 2005. The long-standing relationship between UNGEGN and the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) was noted.

29. The representative of Austria detailed reports presented to a special session on toponymy which had been held during the Geoinformation Connecting Societies conference held in Vienna in July 2006 (see E/CONF.98/38). The documents compiled for the conference, which were available in printed form, were not expected to be posted online in the foreseeable future.

30. The representative of the Republic of Korea presented a paper (E/CONF.98/CRP.42) on a series of international seminars on the naming of seas. Between 1995 and 2007, experts from 25 countries had participated, presenting a total of 158 papers.

Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names (item 7)

31. The Conference considered item 7 of its agenda at its 2nd, 6th and 7th meetings, on 21, 28 and 29 August 2007. The Chairperson of UNGEGN (Canada) introduced documents E/CONF.98/80 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR, which contained a comprehensive listing of the 184 resolutions adopted by the eight United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names. The secretariat agreed to investigate whether this document, which had originally been produced in English and French, could be compiled in the other four official languages of the United Nations.

32. The secretariat reported on actions taken on the 16 resolutions adopted by the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (see E/CONF.98/79 and Add.1). All resolutions had been addressed, but many required ongoing activity. The publication of two manuals and a new UNGEGN pamphlet had been supported by the United Nations Statistics Division. Translation of the manuals into languages other than the official languages of the United Nations would be encouraged once United Nations copyright permission had been obtained via the secretariat.

33. The Convener of the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names (Australia) reported on information gathered by the Working Group on projects being carried out by geographical names authorities to promote indigenous and minority group toponyms (see E/CONF.98/42 and Add.1 and Add.2). The full report would be made available for downloading from the UNGEGN website. Future tasks for UNGEGN in preparing fieldwork guidelines and liaising with indigenous networks had been identified.

34. The representative of Canada reported on guidelines developed by the Geographical Names Board of Canada for the commemorative naming of

geographical features (see E/CONF.98/102 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR). The Conference discussed various aspects of commemorative naming and the extent to which such guidelines could be applied.

35. Measures taken in Finland to implement United Nations Conference resolution VIII/2 on commemorative naming practices for geographical features were addressed by the representative of Finland (see E/CONF.98/122 and Add.1). Intensive discussions on the subject had been held in Helsinki, resulting in a recommendation by the city's Place-Names Committee on the use of commemorative names, intended as a model for other cities in Finland.

36. The representative of Australia described the preparation of the Asia South-East Pacific South-West Regional Gazetteer and Map (see E/CONF.98/CRP.66). Edition 2 of the Map demonstrated the use of endonyms throughout the region and was available in two soft-copy formats. An update to the Gazetteer had been published in digital form as edition 3.

37. The Chairperson of UNGEGN (Canada) noted the status of national names authorities throughout the world and encouraged those countries that had not supplied data to contact the secretariat with details (see E/CONF.98/CRP.30). Missions should also be notified so that the information could be transmitted to the secretariat through official channels. The representative of Spain noted that a new names authority had recently been formed in Spain.

38. The Chairperson of UNGEGN (Canada) proposed changes for future conferences and UNGEGN sessions (see E/CONF.98/CRP.48). Matters such as the duration of the conference, the content of the agenda and the continuing provision of workshops were discussed. An ad hoc committee comprising a Vice-Chair of the Conference and a Vice-Chair of UNGEGN was established to address these issues.

39. The Chairman of the Task Team on Africa (Algeria) led a special session describing the establishment of the group and its support provided to toponymic activities in African countries. A number of topics were discussed including the size and composition of the four UNGEGN Africa Divisions, the potential role of regional organizations, support offered by other UNGEGN divisions, and the importance of the preservation of toponymic heritage. The representative of the Economic Commission for Africa noted that financial limitations often impeded participation.

40. The representative of South Africa had identified steps to enhance awareness of toponymy in Africa. The Conference agreed that it would be beneficial for the next UNGEGN session to be held on that continent. Further proposals to promote geographical names in Africa were presented by the representatives of Algeria and Cameroon. The representative of the Sudan related his experiences as Chair of the Africa East Division of UNGEGN. The representative of Guinea supported the promotion of toponymy at the local level.

41. The representative of the Economic Commission for Africa demonstrated the work being carried out in conjunction with the Ethiopian Mapping Authority to create a digital gazetteer. The prototype for this EthioGaz project was currently being tested and support for the development of the methodology for data collection and maintenance was being sought.

42. The United Nations Statistics Division gave a special presentation on progress in the development of the UNGEGN database. The background to the project was described and an overview of the user interface was given, including a demonstration of the map application and the sound files. The UNGEGN Working Group on Country Names had supplied material, and the initial information for city names had been sourced from existing United Nations data. Member States, UNGEGN divisions and working groups were encouraged to make contributions. The Conference stressed that the development and future maintenance of the database should continue to be supported by the United Nations Statistics Division.

43. The representative of France chaired a special session on cultural heritage, in which the representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) gave a presentation on the promotion and protection of languages, including geographical names, as part of cultural heritage, recalling the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (of humanity) and considering the development of strategies to meet the Millennium Development Goals. The representative of UNESCO outlined the procedures for requesting information or assistance. The Conference discussed the fragility of geographical names and the need to raise public awareness by highlighting toponymy within the 2003 Convention. UNESCO participation in raising awareness, and its support for the protection of geographical names, were seen to be of paramount importance.

Economic and social benefits of the national and international standardization of geographical names (item 8)

44. The Conference considered item 8 of its agenda at its 2nd meeting, on 21 August 2007. The representative of the Netherlands summarized the user/business requirements of a European geographical names infrastructure and service (see E/CONF.98/18 and Add.1). The EuroGeoNames project, running from 2006 to 2009, would link national geographical names databases and make them available for query. The objectives and tasks of Workpackage 2, concerned with the analysis of user requirements, were discussed in detail in the paper.

45. The representative of Australia presented a paper (E/CONF.98/20 and Add.1) describing progress in the creation of geographical second- and third-level domain names. The Australian Domain Name Administrator had approved second-level domain names for each State and Territory in Australia, and Community Geographic Domain Names were to be registered as third-level domains. This consistent approach whereby each community would have a domain name had economic advantages.

46. A detailed paper (E/CONF.98/41 and Add.1) concerning the restoration of indigenous toponyms was summarized by the representative of Australia. Using the case study of the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park plan, issues were discussed concerning the cultural significance of names, the importance of indigenous place-name restoration and recognition of attachment to toponyms.

47. The representative of China introduced the master plan for the project of protecting China's geographical names cultural heritage (see E/CONF.98/63 and Add.1). This three-year pilot project which started in 2004 comprised six main parts detailed in the paper. So far some 500 names had been protected. A book on by-street names in Beijing was being prepared for the 2008 Olympic Games.

48. The social and financial benefits of standardizing geographical names were examined in a paper (E/CONF.98/82) presented by the representative of South Africa. The subject had generated much interest in South Africa and there were plans to quantify the social and economic benefits of place-name change.

49. The representative of Indonesia reported on the naming of islands in Indonesia (see E/CONF.98/CRP.49). It was noted that of a total of over 17,500 islands, more than half did not have official names. The naming procedure and progress made thus far were detailed in the paper.

Arrangements for the Tenth Conference (item 19)

50. The Conference considered item 19 of its agenda at its 8th and 9th meetings, on 29 and 30 August 2007. The Conference considered a draft provisional agenda, developed through an ad hoc committee, for the Tenth Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. Modernization of the agenda had resulted in the inclusion of new items and the reorganization of others.

51. Following a consultation process undertaken during the Ninth Conference, it was suggested that the duration of the Tenth Conference could be reduced to a minimum of six days. The continued inclusion of special presentations and workshops was supported. The frequency of the Conference and interim UNGEGN sessions, and procedures for the preparation and distribution of documents and reports, would be considered by UNGEGN and its Bureau as part of its mandate.

52. At the 9th meeting, on 30 August, the Vice-President of the Conference (Australia) presented a document (in English only) containing the draft provisional agenda for the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

53. The Conference adopted the draft provisional agenda, as orally amended.

Closing of the Conference (item 22)

54. At the 10th plenary meeting, on 30 August 2007, following concluding remarks by the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the President declared the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names closed.

Action taken by the Conference

Adoption of resolutions drafted during the Conference (item 21)

55. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 30 August 2007, the Chairmen of the four Technical Committees presented brief reports on the work done in their respective Committees and introduced and read the text of the draft resolutions emanating from the Committees. The Conference adopted 11 resolutions emanating from the plenary and the Technical Committees (see chap. III below).

Adoption of the report of the Conference (item 20)

56. The Conference considered item 20 of its agenda at its 9th and 10th meetings, on 30 August 2007. It reviewed the text of the draft report of the Conference (E/CONF.98/L.1) and the draft reports submitted by the Rapporteur of the

Conference (English only) and the Rapporteurs of Technical Committees I, II, III and IV (English only).

57. The Conference adopted the draft report contained in document E/CONF.98/L.1 as well as the final agreed text of the draft report of the plenary together with the agreed texts of the draft reports of Committees I, II, III and IV, as amended. The Conference authorized the Rapporteur, in consultation with the President and the secretariat, to complete the report.

B. Technical Committee I (National standardization)

National standardization (item 9)

58. Technical Committee I considered agenda item 9, sub-items (a) to (e), allocated to it by the Conference, at its 1st through 4th meetings, on 22 and 23 August 2007, and commenced with two special presentations.

59. A representative of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) secretariat gave a presentation entitled "Standardization of geographical names in humanitarian information management: towards a humanitarian spatial data infrastructure", in which he stressed the need for geographical information to be prepared and pre-positioned so as to provide immediate assistance to any humanitarian relief efforts. The representative of the Working Group urged representatives to strive to improve the integration of geographical names data management with disaster management processes.

60. The representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) discussed the need to standardize the names of political divisions, as most political and administrative decisions were made at the provincial or district level, and the data collected in that regard covered a range of issues. He stressed the need for standard naming practices and for awareness of the time component when associating names with geographical extents. The representative of WHO also introduced the Second Administrative Level Boundaries (SALB) data set project and encouraged countries to become involved in the project.

National standardization (item 9)

61. The report of Jordan (E/CONF.98/8 and Add.1) outlined the composition of the names of towns in Jordan, with specific reference to the use of common beginnings of names and the number of syllables contained in the names.

62. The report of Jordan (E/CONF.98/9 and Add.1) discussed the number of repeated names for towns in Jordan, advising that there were 62 names repeated for a total of 165 towns.

63. The report of Mongolia (E/CONF.98/24 and Add.1) advised on measures taken to standardize geographical names, with particular reference to the fact that geographical names were now under the auspices of the President and that the creation of the Geographical Names Board was in process.

64. The report of Moldova (E/CONF.98/25 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/RUS) advised of the investigations being undertaken showing that geographical names reflected the diverse nature of the settlement of Moldova by differing ethnic groups

and considered the descriptive names derived from location, size, fauna and economic activities. This highlighted the need for a special body designed to coordinate these activities.

65. The report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (E/CONF.98/51 and Add.1) outlined the new regulations adopted to protect and preserve geographical names, including the raising of the status of the Committee on Geographical Names of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to that of a non-standing body of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly. Aspects of historical study, standardization, inscription of foreign names, management of geographical names and the supervision and control of geographical names were also covered in the document.

66. The report of Brazil (E/CONF.98/98 and Add.1) introduced the production of a database to concentrate all information regarding geographical names, including the ethno-linguistics of the names of administrative divisions. The sources of such names and the levels of local participation in the naming process and/or collection of names were also being compiled.

67. The report of Finland (E/CONF.98/123 and Add.1) outlined the toponymic impact of new and merging municipalities, and the steps taken to standardize the process and preserve the older names by using them for other applications within the former municipal area.

68. The report of Hungary (E/CONF.98/CRP.4) outlined the process by which new independent settlements were given names, including recent individual decisions which had come into force in October 2006.

69. The reports of Haiti (E/CONF.98/CRP.36) and Uzbekistan (E/CONF.98/CRP.54) were not presented.

Field collection of names (item 9 (a))

70. The report of Saudi Arabia (E/CONF.98/49 and Add.1) outlined the process established for the field collection of geographical names, including the preparatory work, field operation and subsequent processes. The Geographical Names Database Explorer, the means by which users could interact with the Cartographic Names Database, was also mentioned.

71. The report of Canada (E/CONF.98/112 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR) discussed the fieldwork undertaken in Canada between 2002 and 2007. Work in Alberta, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, drawing on a range of historical documents and oral histories, was mentioned.

72. The report of Indonesia (E/CONF.98/CRP.22) detailed activities in relation to the naming of islands, including steps taken to record local names for previously unnamed islands and rocks and also to record other relevant biophysical data. The paper raised a question in relation to the definition by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of islands and rocks.

73. The report of Italy (E/CONF.98/CRP.52) discussed the standardization of geographical names in the Sardinian languages and the development of a standardized Sardinian language.

Office treatment of names (item 9 (b))

74. The report of Austria (E/CONF.98/39) outlined the purposes of the Hydrological Atlas of Austria which was being produced in both hard-copy maps and digital outputs. The Atlas provided a uniform and consistent representation of Austrian hydrologic information to enhance the knowledge of water-cycle components and their spatial and temporal distribution. Also included was information on human impact and water quality. The main purpose of the compilation was to increase public awareness of the value of this resource and to assist in better assessment of possible developments.

75. The paper of Austria (E/CONF.98/40 and Add.1) outlined the progress of the transposition of the topographic maps of Austria into the Universal Transverse Mercator system. The update cycle and publication dates were mentioned.

76. The report of Sweden (E/CONF.98/55 and Add.1) discussed the implementation of an addressing system for rural areas in Sweden, whereby the letterbox address would be replaced with an address based on settlement name and road name. This project provided an opportunity to promote geographical names within Sweden.

77. The report of Sweden (E/CONF.98/58) discussed the inclusion in 2000 of a clause in the Heritage Conservation Act stressing that “good place-names practice” needed to be observed. An illustrated booklet explaining this clause had been prepared to assist in the interpretation. The impact of this clause had been investigated in 2006 and the result indicated an increased interest in and awareness of place-names practice and standardization.

78. The report of Indonesia (E/CONF.98/69 and Add.1) outlined the office treatment of names of islands gathered from the field collection process outlined in document E/CONF.98/CRP.22. The report focused on the standardization of the names through the technical office treatment and verification and validation processes.

79. The report of Canada (E/CONF.98/105) summarized the activities carried out between 2002 and 2007 in Quebec relating to the official approval of names, the issues associated with naming of transport routes resulting from municipal amalgamations, and the collection and dissemination of indigenous names. A publication on Cree toponymy entitled “La toponymie des Cris” is available from www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/publications/publications_pdf.html.

80. The report of Canada (E/CONF.98/108 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR) focused on the management of odonyms in Quebec, detailing the relationship between the Commission de toponymie and the municipalities. Also reported was the number of odonyms in the TOPOS database.

81. The report of Australia (E/CONF.98/10 and Add.1) outlined the naming process used within the Australian Capital Territory, particularly as applied to Canberra. The unique naming selection criteria had resulted in the city’s becoming a memorial to Australian heritage, and provided educational benefits in the context of the linkage of the names to Australian people and events.

Treatment of names in multilingual areas (item 9 (c))

82. The report of Australia (E/CONF.98/22 and Add.1) discussed the proposal to revise the understanding and definition of dual naming in Australia and New Zealand. The concepts of multiple names, composite names and twin names were introduced. A draft revised guideline for the dual naming of places in Australia and New Zealand was included, to be discussed in the forthcoming meeting of the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia.

83. The report of South Africa (E/CONF.98/83) summarized the process undertaken with respect to the renaming of Louis Trichardt as Makhado and the resultant Court challenges that caused the decision to be overturned and the name "Louis Trichardt" to be reinstated.

84. The report of South Africa (E/CONF.98/86 and Add.1) outlined the process to date regarding a proposal to rename Pretoria as Tshwane. Consultation had been undertaken and following consideration of the submissions, the Geographical Names Council had recommended that the name change be effected. A final decision now rested with the Minister.

85. The report of South Africa (E/CONF.98/85) summarized the process involved in the renaming of Johannesburg International Airport as O.R. Tambo International Airport.

Administrative structure of national names authorities (item 9 (d))

86. The report of Turkey (E/CONF.98/27 and Add.1) outlined the details of the establishment of the Board of Experts for Geographical Names, founded in July 2004, which was responsible for the coordination and acceleration of the standardization of geographical names. The meeting schedule and working group structure were also documented.

87. The report of New Zealand (E/CONF.98/50 and Add.1) outlined the New Zealand Geographic Board Bill (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa), prepared to replace the existing New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946. The rationale for the new act was in harmony with UNGEGN initiatives. Main changes in the proposed legislation included extensions to the jurisdiction of the Act and revisions of consultation and administrative processes. It was also noted that geographical names had been identified as constituting a key data set for the New Zealand Spatial Data Infrastructure.

88. The report of Chile (E/CONF.98/59 and Add.1) summarized the current provisions for the assignment and use of geographical names. The methodology for the identification of relevant agencies involved in map production or the assignment of names was outlined, as was the analysis of the regulations and procedures used for the identification of geographical names.

89. The report of Indonesia (E/CONF.98/70 and Add.1) summarized the legislative base for the National Team for Standardization of Geographical Names, namely, Presidential Regulation No. 112/2006. The structure of the National Team was presented; and it was expected that this administrative structure would provide for an orderly standardization of geographical names.

90. The report of Indonesia (E/CONF.98/CRP.23) provided additional information on the structure of the National Team. The composition of the National Team,

including the relevant ministers and secretaries, was summarized. Functions of the Team were discussed and its relationship with provincial and regency/municipality committees was outlined.

91. The report of France (E/CONF.98/77 and Add.1) drew attention to the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The report discussed article 2, paragraphs 1 and 2, as they applied to toponymy and encouraged wider development of an understanding of this concept. Promotion with UNESCO of the objective of furthering the recognition of toponyms as an important aspect of intangible cultural heritage was encouraged.

92. The paper of South Africa (E/CONF.98/84) outlined the process of the selection of new members of the South African Geographical Names Council. It also summarized an initiative whereby a series of forums was being held throughout the country at which a range of agencies could be educated on the naming process and invited to suggest possible name changes.

93. The report of Canada (E/CONF.98/103 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR) summarized the results of a review of the activities of the national names authority. Changes to the methodology included a reduction in the length of the meetings and in the number of activities and structures of the advisory committees. A strategic plan was also outlined, as was the organization of the provincial and territorial members of the Geographical Names Board of Canada.

94. The report of Austria (E/CONF.98/34) outlined the new foundation adopted by the provincial government of Tyrol for its Toponymic Committee and summarized its tasks. This Committee was one of a number of such provincial committees in Austria.

Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors (item 9 (e))

95. The report of Japan (E/CONF.98/47 and Add.1) advised that the third edition had been compiled of the toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors, which included a clarification of the application of the two systems employed for the romanization of Japanese geographical names: *Kunrei* and *Hebon*. An English version of the guidelines is available from www.gsi.go.jp/ENGLISH/MAPS/guideline/toponymicguideline.htm.

96. The report of Croatia (E/CONF.98/CRP.74) outlined the contents of the first draft of its toponymic guidelines for map and other editors.

97. The paper of Sweden (E/CONF.98/57) advised of a revision of its toponymic guidelines for cartography, which constituted the third edition of the document. It had been produced in both Swedish and English to spread the knowledge of languages and names standardization. The contents of the guidelines were summarized.

98. The report of Chile (E/CONF.98/61 and Add.1) covered the main issues to be taken into account by editors of maps and other publications. Chile also expressed an interest in joining the relevant working group.

99. The report of Denmark (E/CONF.98/76 and Add.1) summarized the contents of the second edition of the toponymic guidelines, and a new administrative structure was referred to. It was also noted that the appendices relating to Greenland and the Faeroe Islands would be expanded in future editions.

100. The report of France (E/CONF.98/78 and Add.1) advised that there had been changes made to the guidelines relating to the grammar of toponymy. The guidelines had formerly been prepared for cartographers, but had now been expanded to apply to all editors, not just cartographers. The changes included the inclusion of information on syntax and gender.

101. The report of Norway (E/CONF.98/124 and Add.1) advised of the release of the third edition of the toponymic guidelines. In contrast with previous versions, the third edition included a reference to the revision of the Place Names Act in 2006 and the recognition of Kven (Finnish) as an official minority language. The document can be obtained from the website www.statkart.no.

102. The paper of Finland (E/CONF.98/125 and Add.1) introduced an update to the fourth version of the toponymic guidelines. That document contained the most up-to-date data on population and language distribution, a list of updated publications and an updated list of municipalities. The document can be obtained from the website www.kotus.fi/index.phtml?l=en&s=510.

103. The report of Estonia (E/CONF.98/CRP.2) presented the contents of the third edition of the toponymic guidelines, including reference to spelling rules, pronunciation, Estonian dialects and minority languages.

104. The paper of Indonesia (E/CONF.98/CRP.26) presented the policies, principles and procedures for the standardization of geographical names, which formed the basis for toponymic guidelines. Discussed were national and local language issues that had led to a requirement on establishing clear policies and procedures for the approval and recording of geographical names.

105. The report of the Czech Republic (E/CONF.98/CRP.47) outlined alterations contained in the third edition of the toponymic guidelines, covering changes in legislation and district names as well as the adoption of an expanded list of sources of information. The document could be downloaded from the Land Survey Office website.

106. The Coordinator of Toponymic Guidelines (Austria) commented on the number of countries (37) that had submitted toponymic guidelines to date. The Conference discussed useful minimum content, although it was acknowledged that the format should not be too restrictive. The compilation of guidelines in more than one language and cooperation between neighbouring countries were considered to be important for the promotion of geographical names standardization.

C. Technical Committee II (Technical programmes)

107. At the 1st meeting of the Committee, on 23 August 2007, the representative of Google Earth gave a PowerPoint and Google Earth presentation to illustrate the basic functionality of this freely available product and expressed a desire to include standardized geographical names from national naming authorities. Many data formats could be accepted. Satellite imagery was updated continuously and was, on average, from one to three years old. The issue of the need for up-to-date and high-resolution satellite imagery for areas devastated by natural disaster was raised and the representative advised that special requests to Google Earth were possible.

Toponymic data files (item 12)

108. Technical Committee II considered item 12 of the agenda, sub-items (a) to (g), at its 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 24 August 2007. The representative of Germany presented the report of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers (E/CONF.98/CRP.60). The report provided a list of the working group members, the terms of reference and detailed progress made against the workplan. Since the Eighth United Nations Conference, the Working Group had met once at the twenty-second session of UNGEGN, twice at the twenty-third session of UNGEGN, and in conjunction with a EuroGeoNames workshop in Madrid in March 2007. Several activities of the Working Group would be conducted during the Ninth United Nations Conference.

Data-collection procedures (item 12 (a))

109. No paper was presented under this item.

Data elements required (item 12 (b))

110. The representative of China reported on the Chinese standard for data classification and data sheet structure in the geographical names database (see E/CONF.98/64 and Add.1). The paper elaborated on the two parts of the database structure, which was to be tested and amended and would become the trade standard in China. Two feature classes were used in the database: populated features and natural features.

Toponymic data transfer standards and formats (item 12 (c))

111. The representative of the United States of America informed the Conference of the joint effort between the United States Geological Survey and the United States Bureau of the Census to propose a national standard for the minimum attribution for selected named geographical features (see E/CONF.98/113 and Add.1). The draft standard calls for the attributes to be a unique record identifier, the feature name and the feature location. Approval of the national standard was expected to be granted by the end of 2007.

Automated data-processing systems (item 12 (d))

112. The representative of the Russian Federation provided a summary of the paper on the State Catalogue of Geographical Names of the Russian Federation (E/CONF.98/13 and Add.1). Information was presented on the purpose of the catalogue, its structure and future plans. The State Catalogue was mandatory for use in the census, cartography and the media. By 2010, it was expected that some 800,000 names from the 1:100,000 topographic map series would have been added to the Catalogue.

113. The representative of Japan presented a short paper (E/CONF.98/46) introducing two geographical names databases in use in Japan. The first was a geographical names database for administrative units (containing approximately 48,000 names) and the second a database of residential block-level locations with associated geographical coordinates. Additionally, work had been completed on digitizing all features on 1:25,000-scale topographic maps covering all of Japan.

114. The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reported on the country's toponymic database (see E/CONF.98/54 and Add.1). National geographical name standardization efforts had been authorized by the Order of the Cabinet, No. 13. The database was maintained at the Geographical Names Centre and the source of the data was the 1:25,000 topographic map series. The work on the database was expected to be completed by 2010.

115. The representative of Indonesia presented a report (E/CONF.98/74 and Add.1) on the efforts under way to create a separate toponymic database as part of the larger national gazetteer project. Until now, the toponymic database had been derived from the names as taken from the 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 topographic mapping series and had been part of that database. The national names authority, the National Coordination Agency for Surveys and Mapping (BAKOSURTANAL) had developed the model for a web-based gazetteer which would include the separate toponymic database.

116. The representative of Canada provided an update (E/CONF.98/109 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR) on the geographical names web service provided by the Geographical Names Board of Canada. Since the last report had been provided at the twenty-second session of UNGEGN, there had been improvements that included the following: an improved search capability; web-based forms which could be used to update the database (for use by Canadian Province/Territory authorities); and the availability of a mapping capability. Future enhancements would include a function devised to consider relevance at scale.

117. The representative of the United States of America summarized the report (E/CONF.98/121 and Add.1) describing the United States Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). GNIS, maintained at the United States Geological Survey, was the federal standard official repository of domestic geographical names. GNIS now included web applications and services. Data enhancement and improvement had been made possible through a partnership programme with other federal, State and local agencies.

118. The representative of Finland reported on the Geographic Names Register (GNR) (see E/CONF.98/133 and Add.1). The principal data source was the topographic database of the National Land Survey. The Register integrated the Place Name Register and the Map Name Register into a single database. The paper contained information on the data model, the maintenance process and applications of the Register.

119. The representative of Lebanon presented a paper entitled "Geographical names on a topographic map" (E/CONF.98/CRP.51). The presentation related to the steps taken to enable the Cartographic Section of the Directorate of Geographic Affairs to compile a database of geographical names in Arabic script and in Roman script using both the Institut géographique national and Beirut systems. A keyboard had been developed to represent the May 2007 changes made to the Beirut system.

120. The representative of Tunisia presented a paper (E/CONF.98/CRP.77) on the Tunisian toponymic database. The paper provided a history of toponymic work in Tunisia leading up to the creation of the Geographical Names Commission in 1983. The toponymic database was a subset of the topographic database, which often contained various spellings of the same place. Work currently under way included

the collection of toponyms from various sources, compilation of a glossary of generic terms and development of a web mapping application.

Compatibility and structure of systems (item 12 (e))

121. The representative of South Africa highlighted enhancements made to its Geographical Names System regarding tracing existing names; administrative district renaming; geographic information system (GIS) migration to .NET; a scanned gazetteer; navigation menu; workflow tracking; and a search functionality (see E/CONF.98/81). Future enhancements would include pronunciation; more GIS data and spatial querying; and adding statistical and demographic information.

122. The representative of Germany reported on the rationale for the EuroGeoNames (EGN) project in terms of participants and roles, status of work and contacts (see E/CONF.98/92 and Add.1). Access to the data would be via a distributed Web Feature Service, with decentralized maintenance of databases by 15 countries. EGN would become a core project of the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE). Participation of additional countries would be extended after the completion of the project.

123. The representative of Brazil advised that the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) administered a project started in 2005 whose objective was to create a network of institutions that used and produced geographical names information, and to establish a Database of Geographical Names of Brazil (BNGB) (see E/CONF.98/100). This was to be the model for a Latin American database.

124. The representative of Spain outlined the proposed Spanish Gazetteer Model addressing interpreting information; decentralizing management; updates for a future distributed gazetteer; and implementing search services (see E/CONF.98/CRP.12/EN). Interoperability with autonomous bodies within Spain was the aim. It was intended to link Spain's national gazetteers via the Web Feature Service to be used by EuroGeoNames.

125. The representative of the Czech Republic reported on the development and maintenance of its Geonames database, highlighting the relationships between the Land Survey Office's regional topographical departments and the Commission of the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre (see E/CONF.98/CRP.45). The Geonames database and another geographical database would be integrated, with a view to achieving compatibility with the EuroGeoNames project.

126. The representative of Mexico commented that, within the spatial data infrastructure, there were technical and legal policies to establish consistency for geographical naming (E/CONF.98/CRP.57). The database held base data for national requirements and value-added data. Standardization had resulted in the establishment of continental and island names; submarine names; and urban names.

127. The representative of Australia reported that the Australian naming jurisdictions maintained separate gazetteers (see E/CONF.98/19 and Add.1). A requirement for delineating and spatially representing the extents of features was identified. Options and possible future directions would be explored in a joint project between Melbourne University, the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia and a topographic working group.

National gazetteers (item 12 (f))

128. The representative of Turkey provided an update on establishing several working groups to generate and update gazetteers and toponymic data files that focused on deficiencies of populated place names and standardizing anomalies; establishing a medium-scale and world gazetteer; and determining Turkish exonyms of surrounding features (see E/CONF.98/28 and Add.1). Turkey planned to contribute to the EuroGeoNames project.

129. The representative of Germany advised that a new (Gazetteer) web service was now operational (see E/CONF.98/93). The conversion to a single database called Geographical Names of Germany (GN-DE) provided for unique feature identifiers to which other databases and products were linked. GN-DE would be connected to the EuroGeoNames project.

130. The representative of Belarus reported on a work comprising six books covering six regions intended for use by State authorities, legal entities and the general population (see E/CONF.98/120 and Add.1). The books covered transliteration; general data; settlement names; grammar characteristics of gender and number; commonly used case endings; variants; removed settlements; and indexes of names in Belarusian, Russian and Roman transliterations.

131. The representative of Spain reported that the Concise Gazetteer of Spain had been approved in 2007 (see E/CONF.98/CRP.13/EN). The National Gazetteer and Toponymic Database, based on the 1:25,000 national map, with 1,000,000 entries, was being implemented. Implementation was planned in collaboration with the Committee on Geographical Names of the Geographical High Board and Autonomous Regions.

132. The representative of Qatar commented on the completion of the collecting and archiving of 3,466 geographical names into the Geographic Information System, now available on the web (see E/CONF.98/CRP.18/EN and CRP.18/AR). Information included local Arabic pronunciation; Roman characters for English speakers; standard Arabic; the Beirut Romanization System; feature type in English; geographical coordinates; and feature type in Arabic.

133. The representative of Mexico advised that geographical names registration was based on 1:50,000-scale maps (see E/CONF.98/CRP.59). Statistics were provided on the total 450,000 entries in respect of standardized, single-feature and duplicate names. There were five classes of geographical names: locality; hydrographic; cultural; infrastructure; and orographic.

134. The representative of Australia highlighted the role of the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping (ICSM), which had set up standards-based frameworks for consistency and transfer of data (see E/CONF.98/CRP.87). As a result, Western Australia had included geographical names as the key link among cadastral, street address and topographical databases. Data accuracy, access and timely searching enhanced value to other databases when integrated with them.

Other publications (item 12 (g))

135. The representative of South Africa advised of a study of geographical names assigned in the past 30 years, covering the period of the transformation to democracy (see E/CONF.98/87). The book examined geographical names as an

integral part of social change and provided case studies covering orthography and the fixing of a single form for a name. Contact details for book orders were provided.

136. The representative of the Republic of Korea reported that the geographical names service, the land service system and the management system had been integrated (see E/CONF.98/CRP.62). The newly developed national geographical names information service was accessible on the Web.

137. The representative of Norway reported on a new book entitled *Geographical Names in Various Languages* (see E/CONF.98/CRP.84). It would be useful for travellers and promoted general knowledge of geographical names in different languages.

138. The representative of Romania reported that the number of its towns and communes had increased significantly (see E/CONF.98/CRP.76). The naming element of this process had been carried out through the Commission on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

Toponymic websites (item 13)

139. The Committee considered agenda item 13 at its 4th meeting, on 29 August 2007. The representative of China reported that geographical names websites had been established by toponymic organizations at all levels (see E/CONF.98/65 and Add.1). They were an important platform for exchange of information and attracted user comments. The websites assisted toponymic work; widened people's knowledge; and provided integral and correct geographical names information. Further website development would be pursued.

140. The representative of Australia gave a presentation highlighting the development of the Kaurna place-names website (www.kaurnaplacenames.com) which represented a partnership among the Kaurna people, four local government authorities of Adelaide and the geographical names unit of South Australia (see E/CONF.98/66 and Add.1). The purpose and scope of the website — namely, to promote Kaurna identity, culture and values and to protect significant places, sites and cultures — were outlined. The development process was explained, as well as the end results and the expectations associated with the website. Google images and maps (freely available) were used as a base for the spatial search.

141. The representative of Canada outlined the features of the website of the Commission de toponymie du Québec, Canada, noting its evolution since 1998 (see E/CONF.98/104 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR). It provided a names search, access to topographic maps, and the origin and history of many place and feature names in Québec. A survey of users resulted in recommendations to improve the programme for the Québec place-names database.

142. The representative of Canada reported on the Geographical Names of Canada website, which was managed by the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) secretariat and conformed to the Common Look and Feel (CLF) standards of all government websites (see E/CONF.98/106 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR). It was available in both English and French. More history and origin information would be added, plus information on educational initiatives; and the web query tool on the site would be amalgamated with the Canadian Geographical Names Service (CGNS). The GNBC magazine *Canoma* would become available exclusively online.

143. The representative of Canada commented on the inclusion of pronunciation of geographical names on websites, highlighting practical establishment requirements and associated costs (see E/CONF.98/110 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR). The advantages listed included: reaching a wider audience; encouraging usage and cultural identity by Aboriginal speakers; and retaining historical information. Three provincial/territorial jurisdictions had pronunciation facilities on their websites for a limited number of names, and links were also provided to other sites with pronunciation facilities.

144. The representative of Finland presented a report (E/CONF.98/131) discussing MapSite, the public map service of the National Land Survey of Finland. MapSite had two services: one was free and the other charged a user fee. The report presented a summary of the information and functions available at the website.

145. The representative of Hungary provided an update (E/CONF.98/CRP.5) on his country's toponymic websites. The paper discussed the purpose and content of the three official geographical names sites. There were also numerous unofficial sites including one developed by local university experts which contained a page of related website links.

146. The representative of Spain summarized the report (E/CONF.98/CRP.14 and CRP.14/EN) discussing Spain's toponymic websites, which could be characterized as either national-level or subnational-level. The latter type were specifically devoted to the autonomous regions. The nature of the various sites and the features available on them were outlined.

147. The representative of Mexico demonstrated the Latin America Division website prototype (see E/CONF.98/CRP.58). The website had been developed and funded by Mexico as a mechanism through which the Division could exchange information and publicize its work.

D. Technical Committee III (Exonyms, romanization, country names)

Exonyms (item 10)

148. Technical Committee III considered agenda item 10 at its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 28 August 2007. The representative of Israel presented paper E/CONF.98/3 and Add.1, entitled "Donor-recommended exonyms — or a method for not treading on your neighbour's toes". Serious concerns were raised about the report's contradiction of previous relevant resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, and a request was made that all member States should refrain from this practice.

149. The representative of Turkey presented paper E/CONF.98/32, which reported on progress made towards producing standardized lists of exonyms in the Turkish language. These lists would be made available by the end of 2007. It was noted that both current and historical exonyms would be included in the lists. A statement by the representative of Greece regarding the Greek islands of the Aegean Sea was noted.

150. The representative of Austria presented paper E/CONF.98/35, which described the first major volume of essays published on the subject of exonyms. The book, edited by Peter Jordan, Milan Orožen Adamič and Paul Woodman, and entitled

Exonyms and the International Standardisation of Geographical Names: Approaches towards the Resolution of an Apparent Contradiction, contained contributions from many of the members of UNGEGN.

151. The representative of Austria then presented paper E/CONF.98/36 and Add.1. It reported on an effort to categorize situations favouring or disfavouring the usage of exonyms. Criteria were divided into four major categories: (1) feature-related criteria, (2) language-related criteria, (3) audience-related criteria and (4) medium-related criteria. The paper received several supportive comments, but concerns were raised about the report's potential contradiction of previous Conference resolutions in favour of reducing the number of exonyms. It was also noted that the Working Group on Exonyms had not yet arrived at a consensus on the proposed criteria.

152. The representative of Finland presented paper E/CONF.98/126, which described recent updates to rules concerning Finnish-language treatment of names from the closely related Estonian language. The new rules allowed such names to be inflected either according to the Finnish paradigm or as any other foreign words that had not been adopted by the Finnish language. The representative of Estonia reported that similar rules had been developed for Estonian-language treatment of Finnish names.

153. The representative of Finland then introduced paper E/CONF.98/127 and Add.1. It reported on the status of a series of projects undertaken to catalogue and publish Finnish exonyms.

154. The paper presented by the representative of Spain (E/CONF.98/CRP.11 and CRP.11/EN) described the project of compiling a list of Spanish exonyms for major cities of Europe (with more than 100,000 inhabitants), which could be consulted on the website of the National Geographical Institute (IGN).

155. The representative of Lebanon presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.32, which described historical aspects of place names and difficulties encountered in the standardization of exonyms. The paper highlighted the possible benefits of thoughtful exonym use and contributed to the discussion of the role of exonyms in the preservation of cultural heritage.

156. The representative of the Czech Republic presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.46, which reported on the status of the project of publishing a list of some 2,500 exonyms in the Czech language.

Reports on programmes to assist with the pronunciation of names (item 11)

157. No papers were presented under this agenda item.

Writing systems (item 16)

158. The Committee considered item 16 of the agenda, sub-items (a) to (c), at its 2nd meeting, on 28 August 2007.

Romanization (item 16 (a))

159. The Convener of the UNGEGN Working Group on Romanization Systems presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.3. It discussed the recent activities of the Working Group, including its various meetings and its compilation and updating of the UNGEGN report on languages covered by United Nations resolutions on

romanization. The status of the romanization systems for several languages, including Amharic, Khmer, Persian, Armenian, Georgian, Kazakh, Mongolian and Ukrainian, was noted.

160. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland presented a paper on behalf of the Working Group on Romanization Systems (E/CONF.98/2 and Add.1). The paper described the difficulties created by the lack of full implementation of romanization systems recommended by donor nations and supported by United Nations resolutions. The Working Group recommended that a resolution be adopted allowing for the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names to reconsider previous resolutions on romanization systems if the system in question had not been implemented by the donor nation within 10 years.

161. The representative of Israel presented paper E/CONF.98/4 and Add.1, which reported on several minor changes made to the official system of romanization of Hebrew used by Israel. These had already been implemented for a map published at the scale of 1:400,000 and affected approximately 16 per cent of features on that map. Israel further proposed a draft resolution (E/CONF.98/4/Add.2) on updating the United Nations romanization system for Hebrew so as to accommodate those changes.

162. The representative of France presented paper E/CONF.98/115 and Add.1, which reported on the creation of a working group on romanization systems within the Commission nationale de toponymie. The Working Group aimed at defining and publishing romanization tables appropriate for use within the context of the French language, paying particular attention to the romanization of geographical names from francophone countries that also used other official languages such as Arabic. The importance of preparing and publishing romanization systems appropriate for a multilingual society was noted.

163. The representative of Belarus presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.21, which discussed the history of the Latin alphabet, or *Latinka*, recently adopted as an official standard for the romanization of Belarusian place names. This alphabet had been used to write Belarusian in Roman script for many years and so had a more well-established status than other, more recent, romanization systems.

164. The representative of Lebanon presented a paper on behalf of the Third Arab Conference on Geographical Names (E/CONF.98/CRP.29/EN and CRP.29/AR), describing certain proposed changes to the Arabic romanization system known as "Beirut 1972" which had been approved at a meeting of the Arabic Division in May 2007. The paper elicited several comments expressing support, but concerns were raised about whether the Arab League had been given sufficient time to study and endorse the proposed changes.

165. The representative of Lebanon presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.33. It reported on a new input method editor for typing Arabic script and romanized Arabic, which had been designed and implemented by the Lebanese mapping authorities. The new software was available from the representatives of Lebanon.

166. The representative of Lebanon presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.39/EN and CRP.39/AR. It reported on a phonetic method of grouping the letters of the Arabic alphabet and their corresponding Roman forms based on articulatory classes. This

could help foreign speakers with pronunciation. The problem posed by the Arabic dialects in respect of their relation to the standard form was noted.

167. The representative of Lebanon presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.40. It provided a list of abbreviations for Arabic generic terms encountered on maps of Lebanon. The list of abbreviations was mainly intended for cartographic and gazetteering purposes, and not necessarily for database-related matters.

168. The representative of the Republic of Korea presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.43. It reported on the continued implementation of the 2000 Ministry of Culture and Tourism romanization system for Korean, which, as of 2007, had been widely used in the Republic of Korea. The paper noted, however, that this system had not been used consistently outside the Republic of Korea. It also highlighted problems inherent in usage of the McCune-Reischauer system. It stressed that convenience and efficiency should be important criteria in the selection of a romanization system.

169. Paper E/CONF.98/CRP.71 had been submitted but was not presented by Bulgaria.

170. The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.90, which reported on continuing discussion with the Republic of Korea on a single joint romanization system for Korean geographical names. It reported that, while the talks had been constructive and were ongoing, consensus had not yet been achieved. The Republic of Korea expressed its support for the idea of developing a joint romanization system for Korean.

Conversion into non-Roman writing systems (item 16 (b))

171. The representative of Israel presented paper E/CONF.98/5 and Add.1, which gave the details of a new procedure recently adopted by Israel for converting names of Hebrew origin into Arabic script. This allowed for road signs readable by Arabic speakers to be produced. The Conference expressed concern that certain geographical names might be retransliterated.

Writing of names in unwritten languages (item 16 (c))

172. No papers were submitted under this agenda item.

Country names (item 18)

173. The Committee considered item 18 of the agenda at its 2nd meeting, on 28 August 2007. The Working Group on Country Names presented its "List of country names" (E/CONF.98/89 and Add.1). It presented an updated version of the UNGEGN document listing the names of the world's countries in their locally used forms and in the six languages of the United Nations. A final version of this document was available on the UNGEGN website, and the document was seen as a work in progress. Comments were offered concerning individual names and metadata contained in the document. A representative of the United Nations Terminology Section provided comments clarifying the United Nations position on technical matters related to the document. Concerns were raised by the representative of Greece about the specific country and language codes, as well as the language label concerning the entry of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

174. The representative of Turkey presented paper E/CONF.98/31, which reported on a list of names of countries of the world in Turkish, which is currently in draft form and would become available by the end of 2007.

175. The representative of Indonesia reported on efforts to prepare a list of country names in the Indonesian language (see E/CONF.98/73 and Add.1). The names were derived through various methods such as translation, transliteration and spelling adjustment.

176. The representative of France presented a list of country names (see E/CONF.98/116 and Add.1) reflecting efforts to harmonize various governmental lists of country names in French into a single, nationally official, list which was being developed within the context of the “Grammar of toponymy” mentioned under agenda item 9 (e) (Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors) (see para. 100 above).

177. The representative of Spain presented the document entitled “List of names in Spanish of countries and their capitals” (E/CONF.98/CRP.15 and CRP.15/EN) which reported on the list of Spanish forms of country names and capital cities available on the website of the Instituto Geográfico Nacional.

178. In paper E/CONF.98/CRP.55, the representative of the Czech Republic reported on an effort to comply with Conference resolutions on country name lists by preparing a list of names of countries and their capitals in the Czech language. So far, the list only encompassed Europe.

179. The representative of Lebanon presented paper E/CONF.98/CRP.67, which provided a list of names for the 22 Arab countries using the romanization system approved by the Arabic Division in May 2007. A few possible revisions to the list were noted.

E. Technical Committee IV (International programmes and exchanges)

Terminology in the standardization of geographical names (item 14)

180. Technical Committee IV considered item 14 of the agenda at its 2nd meeting, on 27 August 2007. The Convener of the UNGEGN Working Group on Toponymic Terminology presented a list (E/CONF.98/CRP.68) of terms agreed since the eighth Conference and those now proposed for inclusion in the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names*. Definitions as adopted by the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) Terminology Group were discussed. The usefulness of the *Glossary* in teaching toponymy was noted.

181. The representative of Turkey presented a paper (E/CONF.98/26) announcing the intended publication of a Turkish edition of the *Glossary*, which would promote interpretation of United Nations documents.

182. The representative of Indonesia presented a paper (E/CONF.98/71 and Add.1) addressing its work on the standardization of generic terms in regional languages. The accompanying sample list provided regional generic terms and their abbreviations that might be found on topographic maps, keyed to the relevant region.

183. The representative of Lebanon presented a listing (E/CONF.98/CRP.38) of proposed modifications for the Arabic translation of the United Nations *Glossary*. It was suggested that these proposals be addressed to the UNGEGN secretariat.

Features beyond a single sovereignty (item 15)

184. The Committee considered item 15 of the agenda, sub-items (a) and (b), at its 1st meeting, on 27 August 2007. The representative of Turkey presented a general paper (E/CONF.98/30 and Add.1) on the representation of geographical name disputes in information systems, noting that in some cases use of an exonym carried a political connotation. For geographical names databases, Turkey recommended the depiction of contentious names in a separate data layer in regard to which it would present further information in writing.

Policies, procedures and cooperative arrangements (item 15 (a))

185. The representative of Chile presented a paper (E/CONF.98/60 and Add.1) on its Compendium of National Boundary Toponymy, describing the procedures of deriving boundary toponymy through international treaty documents. Various bilateral commissions had been established to discuss international boundary issues; and the first list of toponyms for Chilean territory as found within resulting agreements, for a section of the Chile/Argentina boundary, had been completed, as far as cartography was concerned.

Features common to two or more nations (item 15 (b))

186. The representative of Israel presented a paper (E/CONF.98/6) suggesting the need for an additional term in the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* for high sea features. Several delegates expressed their strong reservations. Further discussion on the need for such a term was referred to the UNGEGN Working Group on Toponymic Terminology.

187. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea presented two papers (E/CONF.98/52 and Add.1 and E/CONF.98/53 and Add.1) on the subject of the name of the sea between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, stating that the inscription of the name "Sea of Japan" should be corrected from "Sea of Japan" to "Sea of Korea"; and as an interim measure, it requested the simultaneous use of names. In the latter case, it preferred to use the name "Sea of Korea/Sea of Japan" and also would be ready to accept "East Sea of Korea/Sea of Japan".

188. The paper (E/CONF.98/CRP.81) introduced by the representative of the Republic of Korea stated that there had been no progress in the consultations between the Republic of Korea and Japan and that Conference resolution III/20 should be applied to the naming of the relevant sea area, and the Republic of Korea called for the simultaneous use of both names, "East Sea" and "Sea of Japan", as an interim measure.

189. The representative of Japan, in presenting paper E/CONF.98/CRP.88, stated that this matter should not be discussed at this Conference and that Japan favoured a resolution on this issue by the countries concerned outside this Conference. Furthermore, Japan stated that Conference resolution III/20 did not apply to this matter. Afterwards, the three countries made statements on one another's views.

190. A statement made by the representative of the Sudan was noted.

191. The Committee encouraged the three countries to continue their efforts to find a solution acceptable to all of them, taking into account relevant resolutions, or else to agree to differ, and to report the outcome of their discussions to the next Conference. The Chairman stated in his summary that individual countries could not impose specific names on the international community and standardization could only be promoted when a consensus existed.

Toponymic education and practice and international cooperation (item 17)

192. The Committee considered item 17 of the agenda, sub-item (g), at its 1st meeting, and item 17, sub-items (a)-(f) and (h), at its 2nd meeting, on 27 August 2007. The Chair introduced the issue of toponymic training, noting that many countries had dealt with education in their national or divisional reports. It was particularly noted that Burkina Faso was considering a toponymy course for francophone West Africa in 2008 and that the Islamic Republic of Iran held regular training courses in toponymy organized by both the Toponymic Committee and the National Cartographic Centre. Pakistan and Viet Nam were both hoping for Group of Experts support in organizing UNGEGN toponymy courses.

193. The representative of Australia presented a paper (E/CONF.98/11 and Add.1) on an e-learning package entitled “What’s in a name? Australia’s geographical names”, which promoted the significance of geographical names and which it was hoped would become a part of the school curriculum.

Existing education and practice (item 17 (a))

194. No papers were presented under this agenda item.

Training courses in toponymy (item 17 (b))

195. The representative of Indonesia presented a paper (E/CONF.98/72) describing an UNGEGN-sponsored toponymic training course which had been held in Batu, Indonesia, in September 2005. This had been the third training course to be held in Indonesia since 1982 and the course had included both classroom training and fieldwork.

196. The representative of Brazil presented a paper (E/CONF.98/97 and Add.1) describing a newly established toponymic training courses programme and the Portuguese-language materials that had been developed for it. It was envisaged that future courses would include work with indigenous communities.

197. The representative of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) Liaison Officer presented a report on the activities of PAIGH (E/CONF.98/CRP.9) since the previous Conference, describing the course structure and detailing recent PAIGH training courses. Although the current PAIGH training course coordinator, Mr. Roger Payne, had retired, the PAIGH programme would continue.

198. The representative of France presented a paper (E/CONF.98/117) describing a training course that had been organized by the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS) and the Regional Remote Sensing Centre for the North African States, with the help of the Tunisian National Remote Sensing Centre in Tunis in April 2007. Members of the French-speaking and Arabic Divisions of UNGEGN had worked together to produce course materials and to help in course

instruction, and it was noted that this was a good example of collaboration between UNGEGN Divisions.

199. The paper submitted by the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing (E/CONF.98/CRP.25/EN and CRP.25/AR) was considered. The collaboration between UNGEGN and the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing was welcomed, and it was hoped that this would further promote the work of the UNGEGN Task Team for Africa. The past and ongoing support of the Economic and Social Council for UNGEGN toponymy courses was also appreciatively noted.

200. The representative of Lebanon presented a paper (E/CONF.98/CRP.34) describing an intended training course, modelled on a course that had taken place in Bathurst, Australia, in 2004. A number of representatives voiced support for this proposed course; the representative of the Sudan noted the success of the UNGEGN training course that had been held in the Sudan.

201. At the request of the Chair, the representative of China addressed the educational aspects of its divisional report (E/CONF.98/62), which described ongoing provincial training courses in China, and the special training software materials that had been developed for this programme.

Exchange of advice and information (item 17 (c))

202. No papers were presented under this agenda item.

Exchange of personnel (item 17 (d))

203. No papers were presented under this agenda item.

Technical assistance (item 17 (e))

204. The representative of Norway presented a paper (E/CONF.98/CRP.16) on the support of the Norwegian Mapping and Cadastre Authority to Croatia in establishing the Croatian Geographical Names Database. This cooperation had been agreed in early 2006; subsequently a data model had been developed and a pilot project covering Istria was about to start. Croatia expressed its thanks to Norway for assistance in establishing this project.

Cooperation with national organizations (item 17 (f))

205. The representative of Canada presented a paper (E/CONF.98/107 and Add.1/EN and Add.1/FR) on its toponymic cooperation with Brazil. As a result of the collaboration, a number of toponymic materials, including the UNGEGN brochure, entitled "Consistent use of place names", had been translated into Portuguese and had already been used in training courses.

Cooperation with international organizations (item 17 (g))

206. The report of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) (E/CONF.98/CRP.53) was presented by the representative of the IHO Liaison Officer who highlighted two aspects of the work of IHO, namely, the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN) and the Special Publication S-23 entitled "Limits of Oceans and

Seas". Support was expressed for the efforts of IHO in endeavouring to publish a new edition of that work.

Cooperation with public information media (item 17 (h))

207. The representative of Canada introduced the paper E/CONF.98/111 and Add.1/EN on cooperation with the public information media in Canada, noting that such interaction provided an opportunity to promote geographical names issues.

Chapter III

Resolutions adopted by the Conference

IX/1. Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

The Conference,

Noting the achievements and the progress made in the work of geographical names standardization at the national and international levels,

Noting also the essential role played by the present Conference and by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names at its twenty-fourth session,

Recognizing the necessity of continuing this important work with the support of the Economic and Social Council,

1. *Recommends* to the Economic and Social Council that the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names be convened in 2012;

2. *Also recommends* to the Council that the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names be convened in the first half of 2009.

IX/2. Organization of the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the African continent

The Conference,

Noting that thus far all sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names have been held in Europe or Northern America,

Noting also the little progress made for the most part by African countries in the field of geographical names standardization,

Recognizing that the majority of African countries experience difficulties in participating at sessions of the Group of Experts in Europe and Northern America,

Affirming the important role of geographical names in economic, social and cultural development, particularly in the developing countries,

Recalling the resolution adopted by the Committee on Development Information in Africa at its fifth session, held in Addis Ababa from 29 April to 4 May 2007, concerning the organization of a session of the Group of Experts in Africa,

Recommends that the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names be held on the African continent, in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa, at a United Nations duty station, provided that the necessary support facilities (including interpretation in the six official languages of the United Nations) are made available.

IX/3. Creation of a Portuguese-speaking Division

The Conference,

Considering that Portuguese-speaking countries face a common set of issues from both a toponymic and a cultural point of view and that, for those countries, the opportunity to be in a common division would be likely to facilitate their participation in the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names,

Noting that, at its twenty-fourth session, the Group of Experts agreed to the establishment of a Portuguese-speaking Division,

Recommends that the Portuguese-speaking Division be granted full recognition as a linguistic/geographical division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

IX/4. Geographical names as intangible cultural heritage

The Conference,

Recalling its resolutions II/27, II/36, V/22, VII/5, VIII/1 and VIII/9,

Considering the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 17 October 2003,

Recognizing that toponyms are indeed part of the intangible cultural heritage,

Noting that the use of certain toponyms which provide a sense of identity and of continuity is under a variety of threats,

1. Encourages the official bodies responsible for toponymy to:

(a) Identify toponyms that meet the criteria for application of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;

(b) Submit them to the Committee set up by the Convention, for approval;

(c) Prepare a programme to safeguard and develop that heritage in accordance with article 2, paragraph 3, and article 18 of the Convention;

(d) Start implementing it.

2. *Calls upon* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to give sympathetic consideration to requests for support that the High Contracting Parties submit to it for such activities.

IX/5. Promotion of the recording and use of indigenous, minority and regional language group geographical names

The Conference,

Recognizing that the task set by resolution VIII/1 adopted by the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names has been completed with the publication of version 1 of a summary report of activities undertaken in various countries relating to the promotion of the recording and use of indigenous and minority group geographical names,

Noting that the promotion of the recording and use of such names is a valuable aid to the recognition, retention and revitalization of indigenous, minority and regional language group heritage,

Recommends:

(a) That version 1 of the report as published in 2007 continues to be maintained and updated;

(b) That a set of guidelines be compiled for field collection of indigenous, minority and regional language group geographical names;

(c) That, utilizing the various experiences from different countries, a range of models (particularly with regard to legislation, policies and research procedures) for the promotion of the recording and use of indigenous, minority and regional language group geographical names be gathered;

(d) That a dialogue between the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and other national and international groups and academic bodies involved with indigenous, minority and regional language group geographical names be initiated, to further the work on geographical names standardization.

IX/6. Geographical names database of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

The Conference,

Recalling that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names at its twenty-second session, held in New York from 20 to 29 April 2004, recommended the development of an authoritative database on country and major city names,

Considering the ongoing efforts carried out by the secretariat of the Group of Experts, within the United Nations Statistics Division, towards the building of a database that includes country names and major city names of the world in a multilingual, multi-scriptural and geo-referenced format,

Recognizing that the availability of fundamental framework data sets on national administrative divisions, as provided by the Second Administrative Level Boundaries (SALB) data set project under the umbrella of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG), is crucial for the analysis and management of socio-economic phenomena,

Recommends that the United Nations Statistics Division, with the support of the United Nations Cartographic Section for base maps and the Second Administrative Level Boundaries project for administrative divisions data sets, work in collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and member States to further develop, populate and maintain the geographical names database of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, initially containing names of countries, capitals and major cities.

IX/7. Dissemination of information concerning the origin and meaning of geographical names

The Conference,

Recalling recommendation B of resolution I/4, adopted by the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, which contained guidelines for research on the written and spoken forms of geographical names and of their meaning,

Recalling also resolution VII/9, adopted by the Seventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, which recognized the potential of the Internet to promote and realize the goals and resolutions of the Conferences, and recommended that countries create websites promoting their standardized names,

Noting that resolution VIII/9, adopted by the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, called for a greater understanding of the significance of geographical names with respect to local, regional and national heritage and identity,

Recognizing that the meaning of a geographical name constitutes a valued aspect of heritage information that is likely to enrich feelings of identity and at the same time promote awareness of the universality of human naming activities,

Recommends that, wherever possible, printed or web-based national gazetteers and databases should include information on the origin and meaning of geographical names, based on popular and/or scientific sources, along with the associated technical information.

IX/8. Implementation of romanization systems by sponsoring countries

The Conference,

Recalling that resolution IV/15, adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, called for the consideration of romanization systems only on condition that the sponsoring nation or nations implement such systems on their own national cartographic products,

Reaffirming the general principle set out in the same resolution that systems adopted for international use should not be revised,

Recognizing, however that, subsequent to the international adoption of a romanization system, the sponsoring nation or nations may, for reasons unforeseen

at the time of adoption, experience difficulty in achieving national implementation of that system,

Recommends that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names be able to reconsider the relevance of any internationally adopted romanization system that has not been officially implemented by the sponsoring nation or nations within ten years following the adoption of the relevant resolution, or that is no longer implemented by that nation or those nations after that same period of time.

IX/9. Romanization of Hebrew

The Conference,

Considering that the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in 1977, recommended the use of the romanization system for Hebrew geographical names in its resolution III/13,

Aware that over the past fifty years there have been some changes in the pronunciation of Hebrew in Israel, resulting partly from changes in the composition of the Israeli population,

Considering that the official national authority on, inter alia, transliteration rules concerning Hebrew, namely, the Academy of the Hebrew Language, has lately decided to introduce certain changes in the romanization of Hebrew geographical names in maps and road signs which have been ratified by the Government of Israel, and which have already begun to be implemented in Israel,

Recommends the introduction of certain limited amendments to the previously approved romanization system for Hebrew, as specified below:

- (a) The letter ם as a consonant¹ is romanized as V, v, instead of W, w;
- (b) The consonant letter צ is romanized as Ts, ts, instead of Z, z;
- (c) The consonant letter ק is romanized as K, k and not as Q, q;
- (d) The letters ך and ם, both represented by ' , are represented only (and always) in the middle of a word, whereas in the past ם was represented also at the beginning and end of a word;
- (e) The shva-na (previously romanized as sheva-na') is represented by e only where it is actually sounded. Example: בְּרַק-יְבִיג > Bne-Brak (previously Bene-Beraq); but גְּאוּלִּים > Ge'ulim.

IX/10. Support for training and publications

The Conference,

Recalling resolution VIII/15, adopted by the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names on this subject,

¹ As a pointed vowel it remains unchanged as ם (O, o) or ם (U, u).

Acknowledging the support provided by the United Nations Statistics Division for training courses on geographical names standardization,

Emphasizing the importance of such training, particularly for participants from developing countries, as an essential element of national spatial data infrastructure and as a means of safeguarding cultural heritage,

Recognizing the importance of both electronic and print versions of documents available in all official languages of the United Nations,

Recommends that the United Nations Statistics Division should:

(a) Continue to provide funding for participation in toponymic training courses;

(b) Further develop the website of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names into an effective reference and communication tool, including the uploading of previous conference documentation in all official languages of the United Nations;

(c) Include in its publication programme:

(i) Addendum pages containing additions made since 2002 to the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* of the Group of Experts;

(ii) A press kit to assist countries in promoting the standardization of their geographical names and the work of the Group of Experts.

IX/11. Vote of thanks

The Conference,

1. *Extends its heartfelt thanks* to the United Nations for the excellent arrangements and services provided for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names;

2. *Expresses its particular gratitude* to the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat for its excellent organization of Conference-related matters and of the associated technical exhibition;

3. *Expresses its gratitude* to the President of the Conference and the Chairs of the Technical Committees for the effective way in which they conducted the meetings;

4. *Expresses its appreciation* to the officers of the Conference and Technical Committees, and to the officers and staff of the United Nations Statistics Division for their hard work and dedication, which greatly facilitated the business of the Conference.

Annex

Provisional agenda for the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President of the Conference.
3. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the rules of procedure;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Election of officers other than the President;
 - (d) Organization of work;
 - (e) Credentials of representatives to the Conference.
4. Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Ninth Conference (for distribution only).
5. Reports of the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its Divisions, Working Groups and Task Teams since the Ninth Conference.
6. National and international meetings, conferences, symposiums, publicity and publications.
7. Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits.
8. National standardization:
 - (a) Field collection of names;
 - (b) Office treatment of names;
 - (c) Treatment of names in multilingual areas;
 - (d) Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures;
 - (e) Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
9. Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous, minority and regional language names).
10. Exonyms.
11. Toponymic data files and gazetteers:
 - (a) Content requirements;
 - (b) Data models and classifications;
 - (c) Data maintenance;

- (d) Data standards and interoperability;
 - (e) Data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services).
12. Terminology in the standardization of geographical names.
 13. Writing systems and pronunciation:
 - (a) Romanization;
 - (b) Conversion into non-Roman writing systems;
 - (c) Writing of names in unwritten languages;
 - (d) Pronunciation.
 14. Country names.
 15. Toponymic education.
 16. Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation:
 - (a) Features common to two or more nations;
 - (b) Bilateral/multilateral agreements.
 17. Arrangements for the Eleventh Conference.
 18. Adoption of resolutions of the Conference.
 19. Adoption of the report of the Conference.
 20. Closing of the Conference.
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