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Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

New York, 31 July – 9 August 2012

Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits

Actions taken on resolutions adopted by the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

Submitted by the UNGEGN Chair and UNGEGN Secretariat**

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**Actions taken on resolutions of the
Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names**

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This document has been prepared to summarize the follow-up actions taken on the resolutions adopted at the Ninth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN), New York, 21-30 August 2007.

The following format was used in reporting on the implementation of resolutions of the Seventh UN Conference held in 1998 and of the Eighth UN Conference held in 2002. This format was adopted for monitoring the status of actions taken on the UNCSGN resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 9 th UNCSGN	STATUS OF ACTION
<p>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</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Recommends</i> to the Economic and Social Council that the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names be convened in 2012. 2. <i>Also recommends</i> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 10th Conference will be held in New York, 31 July – 9 August 2012 • Twenty-fifth Session of UNGEGN was held in Nairobi, 5-12 May 2009 • Twenty-sixth Session of UNGEGN was held in Vienna, 2-6 May 2011 • Twenty-seventh Session of UNGEGN will be held in New York, 30 July and 10 August 2012 • Shorter UNGEGN sessions and revised agendas for UNGEGN and for the Tenth Conference have been implemented. Evaluations have been reviewed by the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation, for ongoing improvement.

<p>IX/2. Organization of the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the African continent</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends</i> 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Twenty-fifth Session of UNGEGN was organized in May 2009 at the UN facilities in Nairobi, with six-language interpretation. • The ECA took responsibility for organizing the UNGEGN exhibition and cooperated in promoting this session being held in Africa. • ECA has further led in African standardization by organizing a consultative workshop in Botswana, 2011, and submitting the resulting GAP report to StatCom-Africa in 2012. Since 2007, ECA has been developing an Africa GeoNyms software for database and gazetteer creation in Africa.
<p>IX/3. Creation of a Portuguese-speaking Division</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends</i> that the Portuguese-speaking division be granted full recognition as a linguistic/geographical division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Portuguese-speaking Division was created in 2007 under the Chairmanship of Mozambique and Brazil. • The Division has created a website and has provided material to the <i>UNGEKN Information Bulletin</i>; exchanging documents in the Portuguese language and gathering information about work in countries of the Division is advantageous and encouraging to Division members.

<p>IX/4. Geographical names as intangible cultural heritage</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Encourages</i> the official bodies responsible for toponymy to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (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. <i>Calls upon</i> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following up this resolution is the responsibility of individual member States. • Several countries have worked towards these goals, but we have not been notified of any country that has progressed as far as submission of toponyms to the Committee set up by the Convention.
<p>IX/5. Promotion of the recording and use of indigenous, minority and regional language group geographical names</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up on this resolution has been assigned to the Working Group on the Recording and Use of Indigenous, Minority and Regional Language Group Geographical Names. • Version 2 of the 2007 report will be made available at the 10th Conference. • A single set of guidelines proves difficult to develop, but documentation from different countries is being gathered and together with a short bibliography provide reference material. • UNGEGN has created a liaison with the new International Council on Indigenous Place Names (ICIPN); the Working Group will also report on other liaison at the 10th Conference.

<p>IX/6. Geographical names database of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends</i> 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the online UNGEGN multilingual, multi-scriptual database, the UN Statistics Division completed the basic design of the map and tabular interface and the database was populated with names of countries and capitals (six UN languages + language(s) of the country itself). Endonyms for cities/towns with a population over 100,000 and their pronunciation (audio files), as provided by member States, are uploaded regularly. <p>The Working Groups on Romanization Systems and on Country Names, the UNGEGN Chair, and member States have coordinated with the UNGEGN Secretariat to verify data before uploading for public access.</p>
<p>IX/7. Dissemination of information concerning the origin and meaning of names</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends</i> 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following up this resolution is the responsibility of individual member States. • Documents submitted to the Conference might indicate action on this resolution.
<p>IX/8. Implementation of romanization systems by sponsoring countries</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends</i> 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 national or those nations after that same period of time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This situation is being monitored by the Working Group on Romanization Systems. New romanization systems to replace those previously approved but no longer implemented are at various stages of consideration for Bulgarian, Persian, Khmer and Nepalese.

<p>IX/9. Romanization of Hebrew</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends</i> the introduction of certain limited amendments to the previously approved romanization system for Hebrew, as specified below:</p> <p>(a) The letter ך as a consonant is romanized as V, v, instead of W, w;</p> <p>(b) The consonant letter צ is romanized as Ts, ts, instead of Z, z;</p> <p>(c) The consonant letter ק is romanized as K, k and not as Q, q;</p> <p>(d) The letter ן and ן, both represented by ' , are represented only (and always) in the middle of a word, whereas in the past ן was represented also at the beginning and end of a word;</p> <p>(e) The shva-na (previously romanized as sheve-na') is represented by e only where it is actually sounded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This resolution is being monitored by the Working Group on Romanization Systems. It is anticipated that the revised system for Hebrew will be implemented, for example, on maps of the Survey of Israel.
<p>IX/10. Support for training and publications</p>	
<p><i>The Conference,</i> <i>Recommends</i> that the United Nations Statistics Division should:</p> <p>(a) Continue to provide funding for participation in toponymic training courses;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(c) Include in its publication programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Addendum pages containing additions made since 2002 to the <i>Glossary of terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names</i> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding has been provided by UNSD to assist the international nature of training courses in Burkina Faso, Romania, Kenya, and Cameroon. • Training has also been supported by UNSD in the form of financing development of online course units (in English) relevant to toponymic administration. • The UNGEGN website has been redesigned and expanded to provide current and previous conference documents; details of Divisions and Working Groups; access to the World Geographical Names database; UNGEGN publications and sample national documents; links to national names authorities, their online databases and toponymic guidelines. • The <i>Glossary</i> Addendum pages were published and also included on the UNGEGN website. • A 12-page illustrated press kit was printed in English, together with a folder to use as a cover. • To promote standardization, 3 postcards have been produced and a poster printed, based on the press kit cover design.