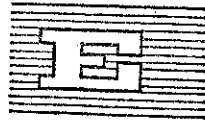


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THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE  
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Athens, Greece

17 August - 7 September 1977

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

Paper presented by Cyprus

ATH.77-140

THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE  
STANDARDISATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Athens 17th August - 7th September 1977

Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda.

NATIONAL STANDARDISATION

(a) 1. Field Collection of Names.

1.1. As mentioned in the Country Report for Cyprus, the field collection of geographical names is undertaken by the Department of Lands and Surveys and the Cyprus Research Center.

1.2. To avoid duplication of effort, field work is organised in pre-allotted areas. The choice of such areas, is governed by the programme of the systematic mapping of the Island at a scale of 1/5,000 by photogrammetric methods and by the research programme of the Cyprus Research Center.

1.3. The collection of names by the Surveyors of Lands and Surveys, is carried out as part of the field completion of the photogrammetric machine plots of the national mapping operation. The Surveyors aim at selecting at least one name to fall roughly in the centre of each half kilometer square. As there are many more place names than the scale of the map can accept, the Surveyors chose the most used names in an area. These they obtain from discussion with shepherds, farmers, or elders in the village, who sometimes give a tailpiece in connection with the derivation of each name.

1.4. The names are written on a copy of the map in English, transcribed from either Greek or Turkish, depending on the mapping area which is being covered. If a certain name is uncommon, its Greek or Turkish original name is written below the transcribed name in brackets. A list of all the names thus collected is prepared in alphabetical order and handed to the office together with the field completed photogrammetric plot.

1.5. The collection of names by the staff of the Cyprus Research Center, is carried out slightly differently. The Center is concerned not only with place names as they are known today, but with all other names which refer to ancient times. The staff go in depth into the

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history and derivation of names, by scientific reasoning processes and prepare special gazetteers. Information on names is obtained by visiting the villages in a systematic manner, consulting with the rural constable, village elders etc. Names are also collected from classical maps and land records held by various authorities. They are then listed in alphabetical order and passed on to the Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardisation of Geographical names, for further processing.

(b) 2. Office Treatment of Names.

2.1. When the list of names is received from the Surveyor by the Cartographic Office as described in paragraph 1.4 above, it is checked against older maps and plans at other scales, prepared some 60 years ago. Names are then spread evenly throughout the surface of the map and a comparison is made with adjoining sheets to ensure consistency.

2.2. A second attempt is made in the office for the standardisation of common names and for the correctness of the transcription made by the field Surveyor. Finally, the revised list, containing the English transcription of each name with its Greek or Turkish equivalent, is submitted to the Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardisation of Geographical Names. The Committee meets at regular intervals as required, and approves or revises the submitted lists. A copy of the final list is returned to the Cartographic Office, while a copy is retained by the Committee for the compilation of the National Gazetteer.

2.3. Names collected and listed by the Cyprus Research Center as described in paragraph 1.5 above, are treated in a similar manner. Names proposed by Local Authorities for new townships, re-sited villages, new refugee settlements or street names are submitted to the Committee for domestic standardisation and transcription into English which is the most used foreign language in the Island.

2.4. Transcription of the Greek alphabet into the Roman alphabet is by no means an easy or simple operation. The Committee is however trying to maintain a balance between national tradition and simplicity in presenting geographical names in a foreign language. No transcription difficulties are experienced with Turkish names.

(c) 3. Treatment of Names in Multilingual Areas

3.1. In Cyprus, we have not experienced problems in multilingual areas. Until the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in July-August 1974, the Island was inhabited in either mixed Towns or Villages, or, in purely Greek and purely Turkish villages with a ratio of about five Greeks to one Turk. The Cyprus Population Distribution Map exhibited here, demonstrates the genuineness of this statement.

3.2. Names in purely Greek or Turkish areas are treated as described in the earlier paragraphs. In mixed villages, each name is treated on the basis of its ethnic or linguistic origin and transcribed into English using as a guide the "Romanisation Guide" published by the Department of State of the United States in 1964.

3.3. In the British Sovereign Base Areas, names appear in all the three languages, viz. English, Greek and Turkish. Street names in the built-up areas of Akrotiri, Episkopi and Dhekelia are all in English.

3.4. In the northern part of Cyprus which is under Turkish military occupation, all geographical names have been changed. By this action, Turkey has shown disrespect to history, culture and legality. Although there is an official edition of the Administration and Road Map of Cyprus in English, Greek and Turkish the invaders renamed everything, contravening every law of ethics, and creating confusion among members of the U.N. Force in Cyprus and diplomats who visit the north part of Cyprus.

3.5. The Cyprus Government, considers that this Conference is the most appropriate body to condemn the Turkish action, in renaming geographical names in the North and seeks its support in the maintenance of all geographic names throughout the territory of Cyprus as they existed prior to the invasion.

(d) 4. Administrative Structure of National Names Authorities

4.1. The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardisation of Geographical Names, was set up vide Council of Ministers' decision No. 15,769 of the 21st April 1977. The decision provides inter alia that the Committee is to be composed of five members as follows :

- 4.2. (a) One member to be nominated by the Ministry of the Interior.
- (b) One member to be nominated by the Department of Lands and Surveys.
- (c) Two members to be nominated by the Ministry of Education, and
- (d) One member to be nominated by the Cyprus Research Center.

4.3. The terms of reference of the Committee are :-

- (a) To organise, co-ordinate and administer the collection and domestic standardisation of names and to undertake any other matter with local authorities with respect to names.
- (b) To communicate and co-operate with the appropriate Section of the United Nations Organisation in connection with geographical names.
- (c) To communicate and co-operate with other national names authorities as the need arises.

4.4. The address of the Committee is :-

Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardisation  
of Geographical Names,  
c/o Cyprus Research Center,  
Post Office Box 1436  
Nicosia, CYPRUS.

Paper presented by Cyprus.