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New York, 25 August - 3 September 1992
Item 6(f) of the Provisional Agenda *

TOPONYMIC DATA FILES:

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Digital gazetter prototype (Draft)

Submitted by United States of America **/

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**/ Prepared by Dr. Richard R. Randall, Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Name

DIGITAL GAZETTEER PROTOTYPE FOR THE US DEFENSE MAPPING AGENCY

The Defense Mapping Agency is working with a contractor to develop a digital gazetteer. The specifications for the gazetteer are contained in a publication whose cover page and table of contents are attached. The large size of the publication prevents its reproduction in quantity for distribution as a conference paper. Individuals interested in learning about this activity can obtain a copy from the US delegation.

When complete, the gazetteer will provide a digital version of all BGN gazetteers of areas outside the United States which are now available only in paper format. The gazetteers cover about 175 countries and regions and have over 4 million names. The program is complex for a variety of reasons. One factor is the requirement to design software to show diacritics for all letters where appropriate. The software and equipment should be complete in the first part of 1993, and digital gazetteers should be available later that year. The full transfer of current gazetteer information will require some period of time. The rise of new countries in the past 2 years will require considerable editing and revision of current files.

Comments on the digital prototype specifications are invited. Individuals may communicate with Dr. Randall, Geographer of DMA. Because the program is now nearing completion, comments should be sent as soon as possible.

The final products will be available to customers on a sale basis.

DIGITAL GAZETTEER PROTOTYPE

(DRAFT)

FINAL REPORT

23 MARCH 1992

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the development of DMA's Digital Gazetteer Prototype Version 1.0. The selection of a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) CD-ROM authoring software package for development of the Digital Gazetteer protoype is discussed. This is followed by a description of the nine steps in the Digital Gazetteer prototype development: database design, initial data conversion (part 1), initial data conversion (part 2), final data conversion, indexing, retrieval engine configuration, CD-ROM premastering, test disc production, and mastering/duplication. Significant findings are discussed next. Finally, the plans for future enhancements and development of a second Digital Gazetteer prototype are presented. The installation and operation of the Digital Gazetteer Prototype 1.0 software and dataset on CD-ROM is described in a separate user's manual [*Digital Gazetteer Prototype Software User's Guide Version 1.0*]. A list of terms and abbreviations is presented in Appendix 5.

The DMA Gazetteer is a world place names database which includes proper names, geographic locations, feature codes, and other data for locations covering the entire world. DMA Systems Center is currently developing a capability for distributing these gazetteer datasets on Compact Disc Read Only Memory (CD-ROM), which will improve the distribution of the data and provide more timely and accessible information. The Digital Gazetteer prototype represents an initial demonstration of this capability.

A commercially-available CD-ROM authoring system (the "Questar" system from Sony) was used in the prototype development. This system provides a user interface and data retrieval "engine" to provide browsing and query capability for the gazetteer dataset. The prototype 1.0 gazetteer dataset includes South and Central America, the West Indies, South Africa, and Afghanistan, for a total dataset size of 200 megabytes (MB).