

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
29 June 2007

Original: English

**Ninth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**

New York, 21-30 August 2007

Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

**Economic and social benefits of the national and
international standardization of geographical names****Restoration of indigenous toponyms: recognition of
attachment, identity and dependence****Submitted by Australia******Summary*****

There have been various papers presented at the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names which have discussed the cultural value of place names (toponyms). In particular, resolution V/6 had recognized that geographical names were significant elements of the cultural heritage of nations. I would like to expand upon the terms of this resolution for the purpose of implementing resolution VIII/1, which invited summaries of activities that had promoted the revitalization of indigenous place names. In addition, consideration will be given to the relationship of people to toponyms in respect of attachment, identity and dependency. In particular, consideration is given in the present paper to:

- The cultural significance of toponyms and the importance of recognizing the roles of toponymic attachment, identity and dependence in everyone's life
- The significance of indigenous place-name restoration programmes and how they can represent a process of promoting the indigenous heritage for cultural and tourism purposes
- How toponymic attachment can affect the restoration of indigenous toponyms both positively and negatively

* E/CONF.98/1.

** Prepared by Laura Kostanski, University of Ballarat, Australia. The research for this paper was made possible through the generous support of the University of Ballarat and an Australian Research Council (ARC) Australian Postgraduate Award Industry (APAI) Grant, in collaboration with funding from the Office of the Surveyor-General, Victoria.

*** The full text of the paper is being issued in English only as document E/CONF.98/41/Add.1.



These topics will be discussed in regard to a case study from the State of Victoria in south-eastern Australia on the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park. Gariwerd/the Grampians is a popular recreational area with a strong indigenous cultural heritage. Examination of the Gariwerd/Grampians case study allows insight into the roles and meanings of place names; and, through a discussion of the framework and methodology of the case study, consideration will be given to indigenous place-name restoration guidelines in Victoria, Australia and the world. This paper recommends that:

- Policy developments occur within the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names regarding the status of the cultural heritage of place names
- Further guidelines be developed within the Group of Experts regarding the importance of indigenous place-name restoration
- The Group of Experts consider developing further community education programmes in regard to the promotion of indigenous people's cultural heritage and place names

This paper is exploratory in nature and is intended to encourage further discussion about the meanings of place names. All responses to the ideas contained within this paper and any suggestions or comments are welcomed by the author.
