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GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES**

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REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

Report of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

(Submitted by Republic of Korea)**

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Establishment of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

The Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation was re-established at the 20th Session of the UNGEGN in New York in January 2000.

In order to implement the objectives of the Working Group a number of indispensable documents has been collated, namely the Statutes of the UNGEGN, Rules of Procedure' of UNGEGN and the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names, as well as the Resolutions arranged alphabetically by subject adopted at the first seven(7) UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

A copy of this publication has been distributed to the distinguished delegates to the 8th UN Conference by the Working Group. The Working Group trusts that this document will encourage experts and delegates, and will enable them to co-operate with the Working Group to ensure efficient implementation of resolutions and th expedite the standardization of geographical names, also in those countries which hitherto have been unable th exercise their prerogative in this regard.

The present publication has been prepared by Dr. Peter Raper, Chairman of the UNGEGN for the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation in order to facilitate its work.

The Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation especially appreciates Dr. Raper contribution to the Working Group and for making this document available to the Group.

Introduction to the publication and background

Ever since people first started orientating themselves in their surroundings and communicating with each other, the names they gave to features have played a vital role in their vocabulary.

The phenomenal advances in communication brought about by sophisticated modern-day technology, particularly in the fields of electronic media and printing, have enormously increased international and interlinguistic usage of geographical names. These names have become key elements in socio-economic activities such as cartography, census and relief operations, postal services, trade, and the like. In this context the essentiality of identifying and referring unambiguously to a geographical entity is obvious. Such identification and reference is precisely the goal of the standardization of geographical names.

However, there are many factors which interfere with effective communication and the unambiguous use of geographical names:

(a) there are many places which have more than one name, either in the same country or in other countries;

- (b) many names have been applied to more than one place;
- (c) the same name has been spelt in different ways;
- (d) people in certain countries or language areas have names for places in different countries and areas which are different from the local ones;
- (e) geographical names in languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Greek, hebrew, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Thai, etc., are written in non-Roman scripts.

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names(UNGEGN) is one of seven standing expert bodies of the United Nations Economic and Social Council(ECOSOC). It was established with a view to furthering the standardization of geographical names at both national and international levels and is, by virtue of its composition and status, the most authoritative body dealing with geographical names.

Among the most useful tangible results of the work of the UNGEGN and of the UN Conferences on the Standadization of Geographical Names are the resolutions adopted at the Conferences. When implemented, they ensure products and activities which comply with the highest international standards.

The need has long been felt for a publication including the most relevant United Nations documents relating th geographical names. Indeed, recommendations in this regard have been adopted by the Group of Experts, since experts attending sessions of the Group and UN Conferences of the Standardization of Geographical Names are not always clear on protocol, procedures, etc. Furthermore, ignorance of resolutions, and a concomitant wastage of time, energy and resources.

This publication will do much th counter such a situation, since it contains the background necessary for the information of experts to the Group, statute, rules of procedure, guidelines for the preparation and submission of documents and working papers, comprehensive resolutions adopted at the seven UN Conferences held to date, the glossary of terminology relevant to geographical names, toponymic data exchange formats and standards, and eight transliteration tables.

These documents are also indispensable to statesmen, administrators, officials and other decision-makers, cartographers, compilers of atlases, journalists, teachers, and everyone whose work requires knowledge of United Nations resolutions and other relevant documents on geographical names.