

Ad-Hoc Group of Experts on
the Standardization of
Geographical Names

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AIMS, FUNCTIONS AND MODUS OPERANDI

submitted by the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts on
the Standardization of Geographical Names

1. At its Forty-fourth session under Agenda item 17, the United Nations Economic and Social Council adopted the resolution 1314 (XLIV) - standardization of geographical names -. This resolution invited the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts on Geographical Names to provide the necessary co-ordination of international activities in the field of geographical names and approved as terms of reference for the Group the specific matters recommended at the Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in Geneva (4-22nd September 1967) and described in Volume 1 - Report of the Conference (United Nations Document E/CONF.53/3).
2. In execution of this task the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts is charged with providing for continuous co-ordination and liaison among nations to further the standardization of geographical names and to encourage the formation and work of linguistic, geographical divisions.
3. In order to carry out its work and to achieve the results required, both on a national and on an international level, as specified in the resolutions adopted in Geneva, the linguistic/geographical divisions as defined at Geneva will continue to exist and the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will encourage and support meetings to be held within each of the divisions.
4. The fourteen major linguistic/geographical divisions of the world as defined at Geneva in 1967 are :
 - (1) United States and Canada
 - (2) Latin America
 - (3) United Kingdom group
 - (4) Europe-Dutch and German speaking
 - (5) Norden
 - (6) Romance languages area
 - (7) Europe-East Central and South-East
 - (8) Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics
 - (9) Arabic
 - (10) Asia-Southwest, other than Arabic
 - (11) Indian Group
 - (12) Asia-Southeast
 - (13) Asia-East
 - (14) Africa South of the Sahara
5. The Ad-Hoc Group of Experts is composed of one representative from each division. Countries within each division will select, by methods of their own choosing, an expert to represent the division at meetings of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts or to speak, when required to do so, on behalf of the division as a whole at United Nations conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names. As an interim measure the present Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will continue to function until replaced by election.
6. The appointed expert will be responsible for ensuring the work of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts and its potential for technical assistance is brought to the attention of individual nations within his division and for reporting to the United Nations any special problems within his division.

7. A nation not already a member of a division will decide for itself the division to which it wishes to belong. A nation may also participate in the activities of divisions other than its own, provided the total number of nations and the nature of their participation are not such as to change the linguistic/geographical character of the division.
8. The Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will elect the following officers :
a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Rapporteur.

The election will be held at the termination of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. They will serve until their successors are elected at the next conference. The Cartography Section of the United Nations will serve as the Secretariat of the Group.

9. In the case of the permanent absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman will assume the office of Chairman. In the absence of the Vice-Chairman or the Rapporteur, the Chairman will appoint persons to complete the unexpired portion of their terms of office.
10. (a) the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will meet just before and immediately after United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names in the place where the conference is held
(b) the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will meet at least one year in advance of each United Nations conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in order to make preparations for the Conference
(c) At times other than those mentioned above, meetings of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts may be specially convened.
11. Governments may appoint national experts to attend meetings of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts on the understanding that the said national experts will have the right of voice and that their attendance will be co-ordinated with the Expert who represents the division in question and votes on behalf of the division.
12. Persons with special knowledge of particular aspects of the Standardization of Geographical Names may be invited to place before the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts their specialized knowledge.
13. During the meetings of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts, special working groups may be appointed to deal with particular issues. Upon completion of the appointed task, the working group will be automatically disbanded unless specially directed to remain in being.
14. Between meetings of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts, working groups of specialists can be formed under the chairmanship of one of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts to study particular problems. Such groups will only be formed with the approval of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts. Their conclusions and recommendations will require approval by the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts before submission to the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names for final acceptance.

15. The working languages of the United Nations selected for the conduct of business during the meetings of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will depend upon the nature of the representation and the facilities available at the time.
16. The Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will maintain communication among themselves and will render a report of their main activities semi-annually to the Cartography Section of the United Nations and to the members and officers of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts.
17. Apart from communication through formal channels, experts representing divisions and also national representatives will be notified by informal means of the transactions, programs, and requirements of the Ad-Hoc Group of Experts.
18. The Ad-Hoc Group of Experts will encourage nations to supply information to other nations within or outside their respective divisions and also to the United Nations Cartography Section.