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REPORT BY THE
IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT OF IRAN
ON
TRANSLITERATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
TO THE
SIXTH SESSION OF GROUP OF EXPERTS OF
THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES



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New york , 5 - 26 March 1975

The Delegation of the Imperial Government of Iran is highly pleased to bring to the attention of the Sixth. session of the Group of Experts on Standardization of Geographic Names that since its Fifth session, a regional conference was held in Tehran, from 26 September to 2nd , October 1974 in which the authorized representatives of Iran and Republic of Pakistan discussed the various problems necessary for the standardazation of Geographic Names, The results of this conference are attached to the present document as Appendix No, 1.

It will benoted from the records of the Fifth session that a similar conference had taken place between the delegates of Iran and Afghanistan in February 1973. The results of the latter conference are also attached to the present document as Appendix No, 2.

The geographic zone of responsibility of the Iranian Government, namely the area covering the Persian speaking countries, or those who use Persian in their maps, include Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and some of the Soviet Republics adjoining these countries , It is hoped that similar conferences will be held with the countries that so far have not participated in the above regional meetings and the reports submitted for consideration of the Group of Experts.

The Government of Iran is grateful for the valuable collaboration of delegates from Afghanistan and Pakistan at the meetings referred to above and is looking forward to meet such delegates at the next United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographic Names.

**THE MINUTES OF IRAN-AFGHANISTAN'S
REGIONAL MEETINGS**

ON

TRANSLITERATION OF GEOGRAFICAL NAMES

TEHRAN-IRAN

10-17 February 73

The Regional Meeting on transliteration of geographical names was held at 0900 hours February 11, 1973 at the State's Geographical Organization by LG Sadeghian, Chief, State's Geographical Organization; Dr. Mahyar Navabi, Professor and Director of Language Group, Teheran University; Dr. Mohammad Hasan Ganji, Professor and Director of Geography Group, Teheran University; Dr. Kazem Vadi-ee Professor of Geography of Teheran University; MG Nurbakhsh, Deputy, Chief, State's Geographical Organization; BG Daneshvar, Scientific Director of Geographical Information; BG Khalvati, Technical Director of Topographic Operations; Colonel Daneshvar, Chief, Foreign Relations; Colonel Shah-Bandeh, adviser to Geographical Information's Scientific Directorate and Engineer Mozafareddin Yaghoubi Chief, Cartography Department of Afghanistan.

BACKGROUND

When UN's world conference on transliteration was held in Geneva in Shahrivar 1347 (the month ending September 22 1968) Iran attended this conference and the procedure on conversion

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of Farsi Geographical names to Latin was approved and the Farsi speaking countries group was designated. Furthermore, Iran was assigned to take appropriate measure on holding a regional meeting at a convenient time.

During the past two or three years it was hoped that Iran and Afghanistan would find a chance to get together to discuss the question of writing Farsi geographical names in Latin, but unfortunately this chance was never found due to failure of Afghanistan's representation at such a meeting.

In Dey, 1351 (The month ending January 20, 1973) the GOI authorized the State's Geographical Organization to request the Government of Afghanistan to nominate a representative to attend the preliminary conference on transliteration of geographical names.

Upon nomination of Engineer Yaghoubi, Chief of Cartography by Afghanistan, the State's Geographical Organization officially invited him to come to Iran for a period of one week to discuss the subject matter.

THE FIRST MEETING

The first meeting of the preliminary conference began with inaugural speech of LG Sadeghian as per following:

" To begin with, I like to thank Mr. Yaghoubi of our friendly and brother country of Afghanistan who has come to Iran by

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invitation of the State's Geographical Organization. The regional conference on transliteration of geographical names which has been approved by His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah is hereby being inaugurated."

Then Mr. Yaghoubi, Afghanistan representative said:

" Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen"

As a representative of the Government of Afghanistan it is indeed a pleasure for me to attend the conference on transliteration of Farsi, Poshtu and Dari geographical names. Thank you for your hospitality. I hope that the present meeting and the ensuing ones would succeed in consolidating the transliteration systems of the two countries and would prepare a detailed and comprehensive system that not only Afghanistan and Iran, but the United Nations Organization would also benefit from it." Then General Sadeghian gave a comprehensive report to the meeting on the background of the subject matter and at the end presented a procedure for conversion of Farsi and Latin geographical names and requested the Afghanistan representative to have it studied and give his comments.

THE SECOND MEETING:

The second meeting, presided over by LG Sadeghian was held on February 13, 1973 at the State's Geographical Organization.

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The Chairman, after giving a brief explanation on the materials presented to the meeting by Afghanistan representative stated that the system or procedure proposed by Afghanistan has been inspired from a sense of international cooperation and in preparation of this system Mr. Dahle of the UN, whom you all know, has collaborated with the Government of Afghanistan. Then Mr. Yaghoubi informed the meeting how transliteration of geographical names takes place in Afghanistan. He said:

" In my opinion, the following measures must be taken in transliteration system:

- 1- Selection and improvement of short syllables system covering all countries of the world and official adaptation of this system by the UN.
- 2- All geographical names or at least the significant ones such as the names of capitals, ports, towns and other internationally important places be registered in maps on the basis of the relevant country's views and comments.
- 3- Preparation of a geographical dictionary.

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- 4- Utilization of the views and ideas of experts and the materials that other countries have prepared in this regard.
- 5- Based on the both systems of Iran and Afghanistan, the meeting must try to set up a joint system to meet the requirements of the two countries as well as those of the rest of the world.

Mr. Yaghoubi then went on to explain the followings:

- 1- The transliteration system.
- 2- The technical terminologies of geographical names pertaining to the maps prepared by Afghanistan cartography under a special Bulletin Nr. 1.

Setting up a task committee, the meeting then began to study, review and compare the transliteration system of Afghanistan with the system of Government of Iran approved by the first transliteration conference in 1946 (in Geneve)."

THE THIRD MEETING:

The third meeting was held in the afternoon of Feb 13, 1973 at the same place. The report of the task committee was studied and after necessary discussion agreement was reached on the following instances:

- 1- In regard to selection of 23 letters from Farsi alphabet as equivalent to Latin letters, complete agreement

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was reached as per following

A	الف
B	ب
P	پ
T	ت
S	ث
J	ج
KH	ح
D	د
Z	ذ
R	ر
Z	ز
S	س
C	ع
OH	هـ
F	و
K	ك
G	غ
Q	ق
L	ل
M	م
N	ن
H	هـ

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For dual pronounciation of V (~~vave~~) use of V and W was approved.

- 2- In regard to the remaining 9 letters of the Iranian system as well as the remaining signs and letters contained in the system proposed by Afghanistan, it was agreed that Mr. Yaghoubi, with due consideration to the Iranian system and approvals of the Geneva convention, try to adjust their system upon final approval of the system proposed by Iran and investment of the governments on production of geographical maps and dictionaries.
- 3- In certain instances, the discrepancies were quite minor and pertained to the signs placed above or under certain consonant letters. It is hoped that the two countries experts would understandingly reach an agreement on unification of the signs and would attain fruitful results from their efforts.
- 4- The meeting confirmed the necessity for selection and use of certain specific signs for Poshtu and Afghanis words.

THE FOURTH MEETING:

The fourth regional meeting on transliteration of geographical

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names was held on Feb 15, 1973 at the same place and the following points were agreed upon:

- 1- That the report of this meeting as well as the materials presented in it on Afghan writing system be furnished to the committee of experts which will hold its meeting in March 1973 in New York.
- 2- That it be recommended that the United Nations Organization take appropriate action for preparation of a comprehensive phonetic alphabet to include all vowels available in all languages of the world so that in future it can serve as a basis for the geographical dictionaries.
- 3- Between the time the committee of experts terminates work in New York and the date the third world conference on transliteration of geographical names is being held, the regional meeting of Farsi-speaking countries be held in Kabul or in Teheran.

THE FIFTH MEETING:

The fifth regional meeting on transliteration of geographical names presided over by LG Sadeghian was held on Feb 15, 1973 in the State's Geographical Organization. After adequate exchange of views the following resolution was prepared and approved at the meeting.

RESOLUTION:

The meeting expresses its appreciation for the helps extended to it by the Government of Iran in general and the State's Geographical Organization in particular as well as to the Government of Afghanistan which contributed to the success of the meeting and made scientific cooperation between the two countries possible by sending its efficient and well-informed representative to the meeting.

- 2- The meeting confirms the significance of transliteration of geographical names and its role in development of international understanding.
- 3- The meeting lauds endeavors of the UN's economical commission for facilitating establishment of the 1st and 2nd meetings and appreciates the efforts of the committee of experts and the task groups which helped pave the road for meetings operations.
- 4- The meeting appreciates the scientific efforts of Iran and Afghanistan for obtaining a national, regional and universal transliteration system.
- 5- The meeting confirms that the Afghanistan proposed system would meet the requirements of Afghan languages (Poshtu and Dari).

- 6- The meeting is glad to announce that complete agreement has been reached between Iran and Afghanistan on selection of equivalent of 23 Latin letters from among the letters of Farsi alphabet. In regard to the remaining 9 Farsi alphabet letters, arrangements were made with Mr. Yaghoubi to try to have them generalized in future Afghan maps and other geographical documents.
- 7- The meeting confirms that the plan on transliteration of geographical names from Poshtu to Latin which has been assigned to the UNs' Committee of experts should be studied together with Mr. Yaghoubi's plan and at the same time.
- 8- The meeting confirms the necessity for holding its second meeting in Teheran or in Kabul between March 1973 and the date the 3rd world conference on transliteration is supposed to be held.

Representative of GOI
LG Sadeghian

Representative of Government
of Afghanistan
Engr. Mozafareddin Yaghoubi

Gen Hossain Nurbakhsh

Dr. Mahyar Navabi

Gen Houshang Daneshvar

Dr. Hassan Ganji

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Dr. Kausar Vadi-ee

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THE MINUTES OF IRĀN-PĀKISTĀN

REGIONAL MEETING

On

Transliteration of Geographical Names

held at Tehran, Irān

from 26th Sept. to 2nd Oct. 1974

1. Under the assignment given to the Imperial Irānian Government in the conference held at Geneva, in Sept, 1968, to bring uniformity in the transliteration of geographical names on maps, an invitation was extended to the Government of Afghānistān and a meeting with them was held at Tehran during Feb, 1973. Under the same programme an invitation was also extended to the Government of Pākistān during Aug, 1974. In response to this invitation the Government of Pākistān sent a delegation to Tehran consisting of M/S M. M. Sharif, Surveyor General of Pākistān and M. Abbas, Director Map Publication in Sept, 1974.

2. In the first session the Pākistān delegation presented the following two publications:—

- (i) Transliteration of Names to Roman Characters on Survey of Pākistān maps.
- (ii) Urdu Alphabet and the differences in the systems of Transliteration in Irān and Pākistān.

These publications dealt with the following subjects:—

- (a) The Urdu Alphabet
- (b) The Method of transliteration of geographical names on maps from Urdu to Latin being followed in Pākistān.
- (c) Comparison of Systems of transliteration of Irān and Pākistān alphabets to Latin and differences between the two.

3. After several sessions devoted to the study and comparison of the two systems, the following conclusions were arrived at:—

(i) Complete agreement already existed in the transliteration of 23 letters of both the alphabets as given below :—

1.	ا	A	9.	ر	R	17.	ک	K
2.	ب	B	10.	ز	Z	18.	گ	G
3.	پ	P	11.	س	S	19.	ل	L
4.	ت	T	12.	ش	SH	20.	م	M
5.	ج	J	13.	ع	{above a,e,i, or u.	21.	ن	N
6.	ح	CH	14.	غ	GH	22.	ه،ہ	H
7.	خ	KH	15.	ف	F	23.	ی،ے	Y
8.	د	D	16.	ق	Q			

(ii) After removal of the macrons and the cedillas from the transliteration of homophones in the Fārsi language by Irānians with the approval of higher authorities for the following seven letters, complete agreement can be reached between the Irānian and Pākistāni systems :—

	Irān	Pākistān
1.	ث	Ṣ
2.	ص	Ṣ
3.	ذ	Z
4.	ض	Z
5.	ظ	Z
6.	ح	H
7.	ط	T

(iii) The letters V and W for the transliteration of و in the Pākistāni system will continue to be used. In Irānian system also V will be used for a word like وادی and W for a word like Jow, in future.

(iv) Nasal ن which is written as ن in Urdu alphabet and is not pronounced completely will continue to be transliterated as 'N' in Pākistāni system like ن in the end of Fārsi word باغبان which is also not pronounced completely.

(v) The following letters and aspirated consonants in Urdu alphabet which do not exist in Fārsi alphabet will continue to be transliterated as at present in Pākistāni system:—

1.	ٹ	T	8.	چھ	JH
2.	ڈ	D	9.	چھ	CHH
3.	ڑ	R	10.	دھ	DH
4.	بھ	BH	11.	دھ	DH
5.	پھ	PH	12.	رھ	RH
6.	تھ	TH	13.	کھ	KH
7.	ٹھ	TH	14.	گھ	GH

(vi) Words like 'Gowhar' in Fārsi and 'Gohar' in Pākistāni system which are pronounced differently in two languages will continue to be transliterated according to their existing systems.

(vii) Insertion of accents on the last letters of the words ending with a, i, or u, like Bābā, etc. which are at present being omitted and written as Bāba etc. in Pākistāni system will be considered by Pākistān.

(viii) The letter ڑ which is being transliterated as ZH in both the systems but pronounced as

ر in Fārsi system and close to ى in Urdu system will continue to be transliterated as at present in both the systems.

- (ix) The transliteration of تنوين in both the systems is N but it is being written above the rest of the letters in Irānian system. It will now be brought in line with the rest of the letters of the same word in Irānian system as in Pākistāni system.
- (x) The different systems of transliteration pointed out on pages 2 and 3 of the Pākistān Publication mentioned in para 2 (ii) above between the Irānian and Pākistāni systems will continue to be followed with regard to the following, as these differences are due to the differences in pronunciation in both the languages :—

	Irān	Pākistān
اِ	e	i
اُ	o	u
ای	ey	e
رودخانه ارس	Rūdkhāneh-ye - Aras Meyān	Rūdkhāna-i-Aras Miān

- (xi) For the Alif-e-Maqsūrah, which is denoted by an accute accent in Fārsi system, horizontal accent will be entered in both the systems.

4. The members attending the conference appreciated:

- (i) The efforts made by the Imperial Irānian Government especially the National Geographical Organization in arranging this meeting and also thanked Pākistān Government in sending their delegation consisting of experts for mutual co-operation in a Scientific field.

- (ii) The importance of adopting uniform system of transliteration of Geographical Names.
- (iii) The efforts of the Economic Commission of the UNO in convening the first and second conferences and of the efforts of experts and groups which have taken a lot of pains in working out ways and means of evolving uniform system of transliteration.
- (iv) The efforts of Irān and Pākistān in evolving a uniform system of transliteration for the region and ultimately for the world.

5. The members attending the conference are pleased to note that complete agreement already exists between the two systems in respect of transliteration of 23 letters of both the alphabets to Latin. It is hoped that with further efforts by both the countries, agreement for evolving a uniform system of entering names on maps and other geographical publications will be achieved in due course of time.

6. The Irānian delegation, in view of their discussions, in the U.N.O. and other conferences held in connection with the evolving of a uniform system of transliteration of geographical names, requested the Pākistān delegation to approach their Government for sending delegations to all the world conferences held in this connection.

Representatives of Irān

Representatives of Pākistān

Lt. Gen. M. Sadeghian

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M. M. Sharif

Maj. Gen. H. Noorbaksh

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