

REPORT OF THE
WORKING GROUP ON DEFINITIONS OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

The following business has transpired since the Fifth Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, March 1973:

1. A Glossary of Technical Terminology for Employment in the Standardization of Geographical Names, designated E/CONF.61/L.1/Rev.2, was distributed to the Working Group on Definitions in June 1973. This document, the final report of the WG to the Second UN Conference, London, 1972, was belatedly prepared and distributed because of unforeseen difficulties experienced by the UN in the preparation of an official version. A short list of suggested definitions for terms, prepared as foreseen in the Report of the WG to the Fifth Session, was distributed along with this Glossary.
2. Glosario de la Terminología Técnica Usada en la Normalización de Nombres Geográficos, the Spanish language version of the Glossary, was distributed to the WG in May 1974, after extensive deliberations among Dr. Lapesa (Spain), Dr. Vázquez (Spain), Dr. Gall (Guatemala), and the convenor. A list of modifications to the Glosario, and a copy of the Prefacio, were distributed in October 1974, after further correspondence among the above named parties.
3. Glossaire de la terminologie employée dans la normalisation des noms géographiques, a preliminary French language version of the Glossary, containing definitions presented to the London Conference by the Government of France in document E/CONF.61/L.67, was distributed to the WG in October 1974, together with a short list of terms included in E/CONF.61/L.1/Rev.2, but lacking in E/CONF.61/L.67.
4. Glossar von Fachausdrücken zum Gebrauch bei der Standardisierung geographischer Namen, the German language version of the Glossary, prepared by Mr Otto Back, was distributed by Mr Breu (Austria) in January 1975. This document so accurately reflects the original as to be virtually "reversible" back to it.
5. Four terms (litonimia, litónimo, insunimia, insunónimo) placed before the WG at the request of the Third Central American Regional Meeting on the Standardization of Geographical Names, San José de Costa Rica, March 1974, were set aside after deliberation by, and at the recommendation of, those members of the WG most knowledgeable in Spanish, Latin, and Greek.

It will be recalled that the Second UN Conference, London, 1972, recommended that Spanish, French, and Russian language versions of the original Glossary be prepared. In the interest of bringing the tasks of the WG to completion before the Third UN Conference, Athens, 1977, it is suggested that the German language version of the Glossary (cited in Item 4, above) be regarded as the model for any future versions. This procedure will be most in keeping with the guidelines set forth at the creation of the WG on Definitions at the Third Session of the UN GEGN, February 1971, and will best assure maximum agreement among the various versions which may eventually be completed.

Inasmuch as the convenor will be able to attend the Sixth Session only from 10-14 March, it is requested that, if possible, a meeting of the WG be arranged to take place early in the week beginning 10 March, which he might attend.

Carl Page
Convenor
Working Group on Definitions