



## **Economic and Social Council**

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

New York, 21 to 30 August 2007

Item 7 of the provisional agenda\*

**Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations  
resolutions on the standardization of geographical names**

### **Actions taken on resolutions of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names**

Submitted by the UNGEGN Chair and the UNGEGN Secretariat\*\*

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\* E/CONF.98/1.

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**Actions taken on resolutions of the  
Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names**

Helen Kerfoot, Chair UNGEGN (Canada) and  
UNEGN Secretariat United Nations Statistics Division)

This document has been prepared to summarize the follow-up actions taken on the resolutions adopted at the Eighth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN), Berlin, 27 August – 5 September 2002.

The following format was used in reporting on the implementation of resolutions from the Seventh UN Conference held in 1998. It was proposed that this format be used in the future as a system for monitoring the status of actions taken on UNCSGN resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 8 <sup>th</sup> UNCSGN	STATUS OF ACTION
<b>VIII/1. Promotion of minority group and indigenous geographical names</b>	
<p>The Conference, <u>Recommends</u> that geographical names authorities throughout the world be invited to present a summary of such activities for inclusion in a general report, scheduled to appear in 2007, on these activities to be prepared by the United Nations for subsequent dissemination to all interested parties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working Group established to undertake this activity (co-convoked by Brian Goodchild and William Watt, Australia).</li> <li>• Call for information issued and made available on the UNGEGN website.</li> <li>• Document and interactive world map to be presented to the 9<sup>th</sup> UNCSGN.</li> </ul>
<b>VIII/2. Commemorative naming practices for geographical features</b>	
<p>The Conference,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Recommends</u> that the appropriate national authorities discourage the use of personal names to designate a geographical feature during the lifetime of the person in question;</li> <li>2. <u>Also recommends</u> that the appropriate national authorities include in their guidelines clear statements on the length of the waiting period they wish to establish before using a commemorative name.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility of individual member states and UNGEGN divisions.</li> <li>• Papers presented at the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> UNGEGN sessions addressed this topic (Canada GEGN 22/WP 14; Sweden GEGN 23/WP 29; Canada GEGN 23/WP 35; Finland GEGN 23/WP 45)</li> </ul>

<p><b>VIII/3. Working Group on Terminology of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Wishes</i> to express its appreciation and thanks to the members of the Working Group on Terminology for having contributed their expertise and time on a personal and voluntary basis in compiling the <i>Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names</i>;</li> <li>2. <i>Recommends</i> that the Working Group on Terminology continue to function, with the aim of reviewing the <i>Glossary</i> periodically and updating it as required by a procedure to be agreed upon by the members of the Working Group.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <i>Glossary of terms for the standardization of geographical names</i> was published by the United Nations in the six languages of the UN, in 2002. The text is available on the UNGEGN website (<a href="http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/">http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/</a>).</li> <li>• The Working Group (convened by Naftali Kadmon, Israel) has stayed active. A summary of new and amended definitions determined since the publication of the <i>Glossary</i> will be presented to the 9<sup>th</sup> UNCSGN</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/4. Working Group on Exonyms of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,</p> <p><u>Recommends</u> the establishment of a Working Group on Exonyms of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, with the aim of preparing such measures as mentioned above*.</p> <p>(* ... categorization of exonym use, the publication of pronunciation guides for endonyms, and the formulation of guidelines ensuring a politically sensitive use of exonyms.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Working Group established (co-convened by Milan Orožen Adamic, Slovenia and Peter Jordan, Austria) has held six meetings since the 8<sup>th</sup> UNCSGN.</li> <li>• A collection of papers entitled <i>Exonyms and the international standardisation of geographical names</i> was published in Vienna in 2007.</li> </ul>

<p><b>VIII/5. Joint meetings of the linguistic / geographical divisions and working groups of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> the continued organization of joint meetings of the linguistic/geographical divisions and the working groups of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names to address substantively regional needs in the areas of toponymic training, data files and gazetteers, romanization systems, publicity and funding, and terminology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint meetings have been organized between divisions and working groups on a number of occasions since 2002 (for instance, in the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Estonia, and Greece).</li> <li>• Working groups have cooperated with joint meetings (e.g. Evaluation and Implementation with Publicity and Funding)</li> <li>• In addition synergy has been attained by combining meetings division and working group meetings with training courses, colloques, planning sessions, survey conferences, etc. (as for example, in Mozambique, Tunisia, France, Norway, Spain, Australia, Brunei Darussalam ).</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/6. Integration of geographical names data into national and regional spatial data infrastructures</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> that standardized geographical names data should be considered in the establishment of national and regional spatial data infrastructures and included in their design, development and implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility of individual member states.</li> <li>• Promoted by the UNGEGN Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers (convened by Randall Flynn, USA).</li> <li>• A special presentation was made at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNGEGN (by Johnny Andersen, Norway) on names in the digital datasets of the future</li> <li>• A new brochure has been developed by the Working Group on Publicity and Funding (convenor David Munro, UK) and is being translated and printed by the UN Statistics Division to encourage the integration of geographical names into the spatial data infrastructure of developing countries.</li> </ul>

<p><b>VIII/7. Toponymic data exchange formats and standards</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, through its established liaison relationships with standards organizations, vigorously promote the development of international toponymic data exchange standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers assumes responsibility for liaison with organizations involved with data exchange standards.</li> <li>• A draft toponymic data exchange standard was published in the <i>UNGE GN Technical reference manual for the standardization of geographical names (2007)</i>. Following further discussion and refinement by the Working Group, this standard will be submitted for international acceptance.</li> <li>• Olaf Østensen (Chair, ISO / TC211) gave a special presentation at the 23<sup>rd</sup> UNGE GN</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/8. Assistance to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names collaborate with the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group in the design and construction of the toponymic component of the United Nations spatial data infrastructure,  <u>Also recommends</u> that the Group of Experts, through its structure of working groups and divisions, actively facilitate the provision of standardized geographical names information from appropriate national authorities to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To respond to needs, the UNGE GN Secretariat has been the focal point in developing an UNGE GN Geographical Names Database. The initial aim is to include in a multilingual and multiscriptural format, name of countries, of capitals and of places with a population over 100,000. The database will be searchable on the UNGE GN website through a map interface and by text search</li> <li>• Other projects which will benefit the retrieval of authoritative geographical names are being undertaken, for instance through the EuroGeoNames project and through the endonymic gazetteer/regional map project of the UNGE GN Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division.</li> <li>• Suha Ulgen (OCHA) gave a special presentation at the 23<sup>rd</sup> UNGE GN session on the requirements for toponymic data to address urgent humanitarian needs.</li> </ul>

<p><b>VIII/9. Geographical names as cultural heritage</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Urges</u> countries that have not already done so, to undertake both the systematic collection of geographical names and the promotion of a greater understanding among the wider public of the significance of inherited geographical names with respect to local, regional and national heritage and identity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility of individual member states</li> <li>• At the 23<sup>rd</sup> UNGEGN Session, Botolv Helleland (Norway) presented an oral overview of names in relation to cultural heritage as reported in the papers of divisions</li> <li>• Cultural aspects of toponymy (stemming from local usage) are included in UNGEGN toponymy training courses (Working Group convened by Ferjan Ormeling, Netherlands).</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/10. Toponymic data-collection procedures</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> that Governments expand their existing data-collection procedures for geographical names, and establish procedures for collecting names from all acceptable sources so as to be responsive to the needs of geographical names users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility of individual member states.</li> <li>• In UNGEGN training courses, collection of data from field, map, recent documentary and archival sources is included.</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/11. Working Group on the Pronunciation of Geographical Names</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> that a Working Group on the Pronunciation of Geographical Names be established within the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Working Group established has met at the UNGEGN sessions in 2004 and 2006. Work will focus on national pronunciation guides and audio files, such as required for the UNGEGN Geographical Names Database (convenor Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig).</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/12. Standardization of names of countries</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> that Terminology and Reference Section of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names should consult when updating their lists of the names of the countries of the world in the official languages of the United Nations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Working Group on Country Names (convened by Leo Dillon, USA) has liaised with the staff of the UN Terminology and Reference Section.</li> <li>• An updated list of names of countries in their own language(s) is included in the recent UNGEGN <i>Technical reference manual for the standardization of geographical names</i>.</li> </ul>

<p><b>VIII/13. Romanization of Thai geographical names</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  1. <u>Recommends</u> that this revised system, the principles of which were set out in the report entitled “Principles of romanization for Thai script by the transcription method” (E/CONF 94/INF.41), submitted by Thailand to the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, be adopted as the international system for the romanization of Thai geographical names.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Working Group on Romanization (convened by Peeter Päll, Estonia) monitors the implementation of such systems of romanization.</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/14. Romanization of Serbian Cyrillic</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Recommends</u> that future documents of the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names use the term “Serbian Cyrillic” instead [of “Serbo-Croatian Cyrillic”, as noted in resolution III/9].   <i>(As of 4 February 2003, the official name of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was changed to Serbia and Montenegro )</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note has been taken of this resolution, and where such reference is made, “Serbian Cyrillic” is now used in UNGEGN and UNCSGN documents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>VIII/15. Support for training and publications</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,  <u>Stresses</u> the importance of this* training and requests the Statistics Division, within existing resources, to continue to provide funding for such training for participants from developing countries;   <u>Requests</u> the Statistics Division to include in its publication programme for the biennium 2004-2005 the following:</p> <p>(a) A publication of about one hundred and sixty pages on romanization systems, and formats and standards for toponymic data exchange;</p> <p>(b) A basic manual of about one hundred and fifty pages on geographical names.</p> <p>(*Such as the training associated with the Eighth Conference in 2002.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support for training participants from developing countries has been provided by the UN Statistics Division for UNGEGN courses in: Sudan (2003), Mozambique (2004, 2006), Australia (2004), Indonesia (2005), Austria (2006), Tunisia (2007), France (2007)</li> <li>• The <i>Manual for the national standardization of geographical names</i> was published in English (2006); will be available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish in 2007. Web copy: <a href="http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo">unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo</a></li> <li>• The <i>Technical reference manual for the standardization of geographical names</i> was published in 2007. Web copy (as above)</li> <li>• A brochure <i>Geographical names as vital keys for accessing information in our globalized and digital world</i> is being published in 2007.</li> </ul>

<p><b>VIII/16. Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the twenty-second session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names</b></p>	
<p>The Conference,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Recommends</u> to the Economic and Social Council that the Ninth Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names be convened in the second half of 2007;</li> <li>2. <u>Also recommends</u> to the Economic and Social Council that the twenty-second session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names be convened in 2004</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be held in New York, 21-30 August 2007.</li> <li>• Twenty-second Session of UNGEGN held in New York, 20-29 April 2004.</li> <li>• Twenty-third Session of UNGEGN held in Vienna, 28 March – 4 April 2006.</li> <li>• Twenty-fourth Session of UNGEGN to be held in New York, 20 and 31 August 2007.</li> <li>• The Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation has been looking ahead at future locations and content of UNGEGN Sessions and UNCSGN Conferences (convenor Ki-Suk Lee, Republic of Korea)</li> <li>• To facilitate the participation of African countries, a resolution in support of holding the Twenty-fifth Session of UNGEGN in Africa was passed at CODI V in April 2007.</li> </ul>