



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
21 May 2012  
Original: English

---

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

New York, 31 July – 9 August 2012

Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress  
made in the standardization of geographical names since the Ninth Conference  
(for distribution only).**

#### Report of Suriname

Submitted by Suriname\*\*

---

\* E/CONF.101/1.

\*\* Prepared by Mr. HEIN RAGHOEBAR M.Sc.

## **Abstract**

This report provides an overview of the procedure that Suriname will follow, according to the Manual for the National Standardization of Geographical Names and Technical Reference of the UNGEGN, in a process Towards Standardization of Geographical Names. Geographical Names of Suriname are macro scopes which are used primarily to represent national and international spatial phenomena across the earth surface. Both at local, regional, national and at the global level is the use of geographic names vital for economic, geographic, educational, administrative systems and sustainable planning strategy.

Suriname participates since 2009 (formerly in 1986) active again on the UNGEGN conferences with the aim: the Standardization of Geographical Names, through the consistent writing forms of toponyms

and their application through the world. At a rapid pace the World is changing into a ☐ Global

Village☐ in which Suriname play and important role in digitalization and use of the political map in

the Information Communication Technology ( ICT ) and the Geographic Information System (GIS) . In this respect, as member state of the United Nations Groups of Experts on Geographical Names Suriname is classified in the Dutch and German Speaking Division and should comply with the UN resolutions I/17 (of 1967) and V/15 (of 1987) to establish a National Geographical Name Authority for Standardization of the Geographical Names.

## **Introduction**

The participation of Suriname at the 25th UNGEGN Conference in Nairobi (Kenya) in 2009 through the report (agenda 16) : Activities Relating to the Working Group on the Promotion of the Recording and Used or Indigenous Minority and Regional Language Group Geographical Names and the 26th

UNEGN Conference in 2011 in Vienne through the report [\[1\]](#) Geographical Names and Culture

Heritage Relations [\[2\]](#), is dedicated to performing the UNGEGN resolutions I/17 (of 1967) and V/15

(of 1987) to establish a National Geographical Name Authority in a process [\[3\]](#) Towards

Internationalization and standardization of Geographical names [\[4\]](#) of Suriname.

The toponyms of Suriname and the origin of place names is the result of a complex interplay of historical features, political policy, spatial interaction, spatial design and handling relations of household, business and institutions. The 1097 Geographical Names of places, natural features, constructed features, protected nature reserves, spatial object (monuments and squares), and the land use of the tribal Amerindians and Maroons are a source of historical inspiration. With the exception of the Indigenous (Amerindians) are all other ethnic groups descendants of diaspora of colonization (the white's), slavery from Africa (Maroon Negro'en Towns Negro ~ s), contract labors of Indonesia and India (Hindustan and Javanese) and volunteer immigrants of Jews, Chinese, Lebanese, Guynese , Haitians and Brazilians.

All ethnic groups identify themselves at local, regional and national level with the geographical names within the Surinamese territory. In addition, international tourists who have a historic bond with Suriname ( etc. Holland), strengthened by the geographical names and identify themselves with the cultural heritage of the Surinamese population.

Geographical names are important in the context of how to shape the way we lived, the place we created and how we act at the World around us to interpret and the use of geographical names for better communication between countries, tourism and world cultures.

### **From Interdisciplinary to transdisciplinary approach of geographical names.**

Knowledge of geographical names has inherent relations with spatial orientation and enables us to distinguish between objects on responsible relationships with locations, direction and distance. The use of geographical names was formerly an interdisciplinary manner of orientation, observation and

analysis of phenomena on the Earth's surface. This geographically perspective was called spatial perspective, because in some cases it focuses on people, places and geographical names that are scattered on the Earth's surface. This has its precipitation in fundamental spatial thinking skills between places in comparison, radiance, regionalization, transition, analogy, hierarchical patterns and association. The use of geographical names now has a transdisciplinary dimension; thinking about the space and place has connection with the economy, health, climate, education, planning, agriculture, balance between places, physical and social systems. The spatial orientation is reinforced by geo-spatial technology of Geographical Information System (GIS) and the Global Position System (GPS) as part of globalization, causing the need for international standardization of geographical names.

### **Establish a National Geographical Names Authority of Suriname**

The establishment of a National Geographical Names Authority Suriname will be the first step towards the national standardization of geographical names of Suriname. With the establishment of this Institute will be complied with the UN resolutions I/17 (from 1967) and V/15(1987) and the procedure will be used for the geographical names programme including: 1. The correct and consistent way of writing geographical names: spelling, words forms, writing marks and capitalization. Suriname conforms to the UNGEGN resolution IV/15 of 1982, in which the States are called upon to translate their geographic names in the Roman or Latin alphabet: English, French, German or Polish. All 1097 geographical names of Suriname on the map listed in the Dutch alphabet: the visual graphic symbols of the Dutch/Roman. Suriname is classified in the regulations of the UNGEGN in the Dutch and German Speaking Division. Of the 1097 geographical names are: -38 derived from the Indigenous Amerindians linguistic areas.

- 719 derived from Dutch colonizations.
- 115 derived from Maroon (African slave descendants).
- 4 derived from Hindostan dialect.
- 5 derived from Javanese dialect.

II. Sanctioned of preferred name from among a number of variant names of a given feature.

III. Capturing the synchronic relationship of geographical names with the inherent cultural heritage of the multi-ethnic population.

IV. Classified of the geographical names in:-Settlements (populated places).

- administrative regions.
- natural features.
- protected natural reserves.
- constructed features

V. Mapping of new geographical names that originated in the peri-urban regions as a result of the transition of the agricultural land use in settlements. By mining (bauxite and gold exploitation) and forestry activities in the rural country are also new settlements emerged. The population has grown in three decades of 360,000 in 1980 to 534,000 in 2012. The urbanization has increased to 60% of the population.

VI. The establish of a digital geographic names register (Gazetteer) and a National Geographical Names Website as element of the Geo- Connections Suriname or Spatial Data Infrastructure Suriname .  
VII. Publication of the correct coordinates political map of Suriname on the website to replace the wrong map.

### **Concussion.**

This report will be a recommendation offer to the government of Suriname after the 10th Conference Standardizing Geographical Names of Suriname in New-York 9 august 2012. Emphasis will be placed on the implementation of the resolutions of the UNGEGN I/17 of 1967 and IV/15 of 1982 to follow the trend of the countries that have already standardization their geographical names.