

28 June 2017

Original: English

**11th United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**

New York, 8 -17 August 2017

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Reflection on the past, present and future: the fiftieth anniversary
of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization
of Geographical Names**

**50 Years of UNGEGNs Dutch- and German-speaking
Division**

Submitted by the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD)**

*E/CONF.105/1

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Summary

The report illustrates the activities and milestones of UNGEGN's Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD) over the past 50 Years. From the very beginning DGSD engaged itself strongly in five major toponymic fields: (1) Promoting single script conversion systems, (2) Promoting toponymic education, (3) Exonyms, (4) Toponymic Guidelines and (5) Automated data processing, toponymic data files and gazetteers. Besides these fields of activity, the initiators and driving forces over the past 50 years have been appreciated in chapter two. The third chapter lists the DGSD participation in UNCSGN and UNGEGN sessions. The last chapter summarizes the organisation of DGSD events, amongst others, the GeoNames symposia and the publication of proceedings.

50 Years of UNGEGNs Dutch- and German-speaking Division

1 Foundation and focus of activities

Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, Suriname, and Switzerland are currently members of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD) of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). This division has been established at the end of the 1st Conference of the United Nations on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) in Geneva, 4-22 September 1967, i.e. during the 1st Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Geographical Names, the later UNGEGN, 22 September 1967. It was one of 14 regional or linguistic divisions simultaneously established, most of them under preliminary names (UNCSGN Report, Vol. 1, 1967, p. 6):

- Anglo-American
- Latin American
- United Kingdom – Australia – New Zealand
- German and Dutch speaking
- Norden
- Romance-language Europe
- East Central and South-East Europe
- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- Arabic group
- South-West Asia other than Arabic
- Indian group
- South-East Asia
- East Asia
- Africa South of the Sahara

From the very beginning DGSD engaged itself strongly in five major toponymic fields:

- **Promoting single script conversion systems.** DGSD was in this respect advocating transliterations rather than phonetic transcriptions and frequently the only division that could come up with viable arguments against the preponderance of conversion systems adapted to English pronunciation.
- **Promoting toponymic education.** DGSD members, notably from the Netherlands, established and conducted toponymic training courses, elaborated manuals and other teaching materials and functioned as convenors of the respective UNGEGN working group.
- **Exonyms.** DGSD's special interest in this field is documented by proposing a first UNGEGN definition of exonym (3rd UNGEGN Session 1971, Information Paper No. 31), by many contributions to the discussion on the endonym/exonym divide and by playing an active role in the establishment and conduct of the UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms. DGSD's policy in this field was, however, divided: While Dutch and GDR experts supported UNGEGN's policy

of reducing the use of exonyms, Austrian and Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) experts were rather sceptic in this respect. The first resolutions on reduction of exonyms were pushed by Fer ORMELING sen. and Erfried HAACK and unanimously supported by all DGSD members. It was only later, with a renewed self-awareness of German-language speakers that they began to hesitate about this reduction.

- **Toponymic Guidelines.** This series of concise guides for map and other editors developed according to a proposal and a model from a DGSD country (Austria), published in 1981 (9th UNGEGN Session, WP 10). DGSD members functioned as coordinators of this basic UNGEGN project from 1981 up to the present day.
- **Automated data processing, toponymic data files and gazetteers.** DGSD countries were among the first to publish national gazetteers according to UN recommendations, and DGSD, notably Germany, engaged itself strongly in promoting automated data processing and digital toponymic files.

With toponymical heavyweight members like Josef BREU, the DGSD played an important role in putting UNGEGN on track and in mediating between the political West and East. In itself, the DGSD was a Cold War-microcosm, with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as members, and non-aligned partners like Suriname. Despite their opposite political views, in toponymical matters there was a remarkable unanimity within a friendly atmosphere – and German-speaking members from opposite camps, like Rolf BÖHME and Erfried HAACK were able to attune to each other their national standardization endeavors and lists of country names. In the beginning, when Emil MEYNEN headed the FRG delegation, there were some snubs by World War II victors, and the international experience and better knowledge of English of the Dutch members helped out in making all members presentable again.

2 Initiators and driving forces (in alphabetical order)

Dirk Pieter BLOK (Netherlands, 1925-)

Dirk Pieter (Dick) BLOK studied medieval history at Utrecht University, took his PhD on old charters in 1960, and became director of the Meertens Institute (for Research and documentation of Dutch language and culture) of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences 1965-1984. In 1980, he was nominated professor in settlement history and place name onomastics at Amsterdam University. In 1984, he was himself elected member of the Academy. In his private life, he was town councilor for the Labour Party, where he honed his meeting skills.

As a University lecturer, he was appointed secretary of the commission appointed to standardize Dutch place names (1962-1973), and this involvement with place names probably was the reason why he was delegated by the Netherlands to the first UNCSGN. At home BLOK chaired both the place name commission of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (which advised on municipality names after mergers), and the Commission on Foreign Geographical Names of the Dutch Language Union for an extended number of years.

One of the things he remembers from the first conference in Geneva was the fact that as they entered the premises all delegates were photographed by both the CIA and KGB – apparently, the Cold War protagonists were not quite sure what this group of experts was going

to be up to. These first conferences very much were one of the many theatres in which the Cold War was played and the political maneuvering certainly appealed to BLOK.

Also because of his good knowledge of the statutes and the ability to apply them, he was elected rapporteur of the second and third conferences, and president of the fourth conference, in Geneva. There he was elected UNGEGN chair for the 1982-1987 term.

BLOK is especially proud of his role (when rapporteur, conference chair or just behind the scenes) in getting a number of crucial resolutions accepted, such as the resolutions on the acceptance of the Pinyin conversion system (III-8), national standardization (against name changing by occupying powers, III-16), reduction of exonyms (IV-20, with the unanimous support of the DGSD!), Toponymic Guidelines (IV-4), acceptance of the GOST 1983 conversion system for Russian Cyrillic (V-18). BLOK always was in favour of accepting donor conversion systems (provided they had indeed been applied by the donor country) – he remembers that the strong Anglo-American opposition against the acceptance of the Pinyin system somehow had mellowed just after Nixon's visit to China, and in the final vote everyone voted for acceptance, apart from Francis GALL from Guatemala who always voted with the Americans, but had not been paying attention to their change of heart. Power politics were involved – for instance when the GOST 1983 conversion system was proposed in 1987, the American delegation leader (RANDALL) tried to sway the other NATO members in attendance by producing a telegram from NATO requiring all members to conform to the US standpoint. The leader of the Russian delegation came to BLOK's presidential office with presents, and his ambassador to the UN threatened BLOK that his country would not support BLOK's re-election if the GOST proposal would not have been carried. But BLOK did not stand for reelection anyway.

BLOK attended the first five conferences and the sessions in-between – the fifth conference in Montreal in 1987, was the first one where he was without a function, allowing him to play the role of elder statesman, advising on current issues and how to go about in reaching goals.

Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany and Germany, 1917-1997)

Rolf BÖHME was born in Leipzig. His university study of surveying and cartography that started in Dresden in 1936, was interrupted from 1939 to 1946 by his military service during World War II and a subsequent war imprisonment. After his release, he continued his university study in Hannover and made his exam in 1948, following an employment as an assistant at the university. In 1951, he began his professional career at the Land Survey Office in Frankfurt am Main, a predecessor of the Institute for Applied Geodesy [Institut für Angewandte Geodäsie, IfAG], to which he then was affiliated until his retirement in 1982.

As a member of the International Cartographic Association (ICA) he was elected as Vice-Chairman in Moscow (1976) and re-elected in Tokyo (1980). In appreciation of his merits he was appointed an Honorary Member of ICA in 1985. For the ICA, he wrote the three volumes of the manual on Inventory of World Topographic Mapping 1989-1993.

In UNGEGN he was one of the great men representing the German language group at international level with outstanding success and diplomatic skill. Rolf BÖHME participated in the UNCSGN in Athens in 1977, in Geneva in 1982, and in Montreal in 1987 as well as in many UNGEGN sessions. In recognition of his international activities and merits, official tasks and functions were regularly assigned to him at such international events, in particular the convenorship of the WG on Automated Data Processing and the Vice-Chair of Technical Committee II. A primary result of these activities was the production of the Gazetteer Federal Republic of Germany, which on his initiative was, internationally for the first time, completed

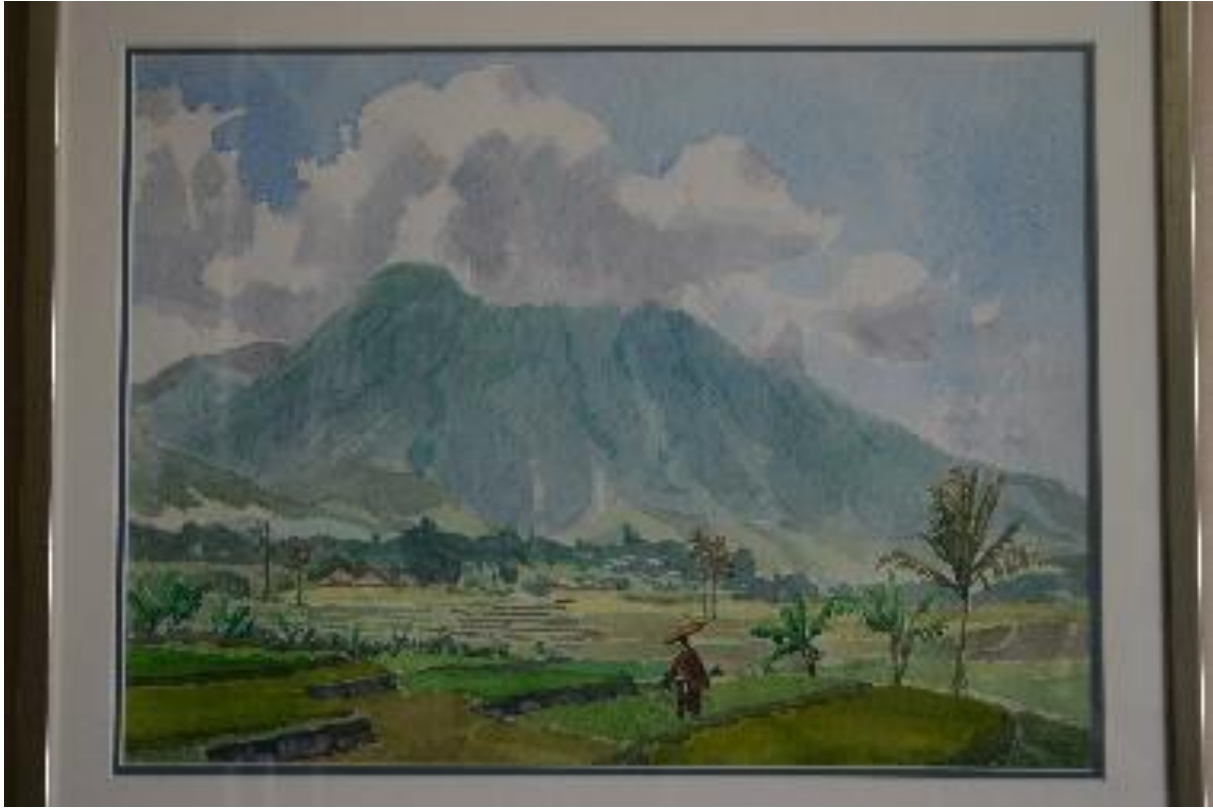
by digital data processing only. Together with the first edition of the Toponymic Guidelines Germany for Map and other Editors it was presented to UNGEGN in 1981.

During the last years after his retirement he committed himself within the scope of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names [Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen, StAGN] to the establishment of a List of Selected Exonyms of the German Language (1994), a German Glossary of Toponymic Terminology (1995), and the revision of the Toponymic Guidelines Germany for the 3rd edition. In 1996, on the occasion of the 100th meeting of StAGN, he was appointed an Honorary Member of StAGN in acknowledgement of his national and international merits for toponymy.

Rolf BÖHME distinguished himself by handing functions and tasks over to his successors always at the right moment, and by his ability to share with others his rich experience and the knowledge he got. Hence, it was always sheer pleasure to collaborate with him within StAGN and UNGEGN until the end of his work, and to become enriched in this way from his lifelong experience. Rolf BÖHME was indeed an esteemed colleague, a recognized expert and advisor, and a good friend, and he was a gifted water-colour artist having had an eye for composition and a flair for the balance of colour.



Fer ORMELING sen. and Rolf BÖHME at the opening of the pilot course in toponymy in Cisuarua, Indonesia



Painting of Cisarua by Rolf BÖHME

Josef BREU (Austria, 1914-1998)

Josef BREU was born in Trieste and grew up in Budapest, Türrnitz (Austria), Niesky (Germany) and Klosterneuburg (Austria), where he passed the high-school leaving exam in 1932. In the same year, he started studying geography and history at the University of Vienna. His dissertation on the history of Croatian settlements in the southeastern border regions of the German-speaking lands was approved in 1937.

BREU, who was a polyglot, worked at the Geography Department of the University of Vienna from 1936 to 1938. In 1939, he started teaching at the Abbey's Secondary School at Melk, but was drafted to the Wehrmacht in the same year, where he worked for the cartographic service. After World War II, BREU worked as a surveyor and private teacher, before he entered the service of the Federal Office for Metrology and Surveying [Bundesamt für Eich- und Vermessungswesen, BEV] in Vienna. From 1959 until 1966 he again taught at a grammar school. Already in 1959, BREU had started collaborating with the Vienna-based Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies [Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa-Institut]. From 1966 until 1979, the year of his retirement, he was the head of the geographic department of that institution. After his habilitation in 1974 BREU became lecturer at the Geography Department of the University of Vienna. In 1982, he became a corresponding member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Within the Institute of East and Southeast European Studies BREU's main field of activity was the Atlas of the Danubian Countries. Josef BREU was also very active in the sphere of toponomastics, especially in the standardization of geographical names. In 1969, he initiated the foundation of the Austrian Board on Geographical Names [Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kartographische Ortsnamenkunde, AKO] that functions as a clearinghouse of the main Austrian federal and provincial authorities and institutions of science and research as well as of

private publishers concerned with geographical names. BREU held the chair of this board until 1982. In 1975, he published his Gazetteer of Austria, edited in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations. This dictionary of geographical names of Austria, one of his main works, covers rivers, lakes, glaciers, mountains, passes, mountain ranges, populated places, roads, railways, waterways, etc. It gives a broad range of data with every name, such as correct spelling, pronunciation, indication of the respective topographic category, location, geographical coordinates, elevation above sea level, name of the administrative unit in which the name feature is situated, variant forms (if any) and grammatical references. From 1976 until 1982 BREU held the chair of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, a board which promotes and coordinates the standardization of toponyms in the German-speaking countries. In 1977, Josef BREU was elected Chair of UNGEGN, where he had already been active for several years. UNGEGN's Toponymic Guidelines were established on his initiative.

Erfried HAACK (German Democratic Republic and Germany, 1929-)

Erfried HAACK was born in Loddin on the island of Usedom, Anterior Pomerania [Mecklenburg-Vorpommern]. He studied geography and biology at the University of Greifswald, got his first degree in 1955, did his PhD in 1957, and qualified himself as a professor in 1966. From 1955 until 1990 he held a leading position in the Administration of Surveying and Mapping of the Ministry of the Interior. The conception and production of the World Map Series at 1:2,500,000 scale, initiated in 1958 by the Socialist countries, was vitally shaped by him from the beginning. One of the consequences of this international project was the establishment of the Permanent Toponymic Commission of the GDR in 1959, which he chaired from 1964 until 1990.

HAACK's activities in the framework of UNGEGN, DGSD and UNCSGN as a GDR expert began at the 6th UNGEGN Session held in New York in 1975 and lasted until 1990. He was appointed Vice-Chair of Technical Committee IV at the 3rd UNCSGN held in Athens in 1977. At the general suggestion of Josef BREU (Austria) to produce Toponymic Guidelines as a decisive measure for national standardization, HAACK, as one of the first within the UNGEGN community, submitted Toponymic Guidelines for the GDR in 1981. His further activities were focused on country names, exonyms and lists/maps of national physio-geographic names, the latter ones including transnational names.

Though there were opposite political positions between HAACK and his colleagues from Austria, Belgium, FRG, The Netherlands, South Africa, and Switzerland, in toponymical questions agreements could be achieved in a friendly and consensual atmosphere. This was also thanks to HAACK.

Isolde HAUSNER (Austria, 1944-)

Isolde HAUSNER was born in 1944 in Vienna, but spent her childhood in the Lower Austrian Pulkau Valley. She studied English and geography at the University of Vienna, later Germanistics. In 1973, she promoted on a dialectological theme. In the same year, she joined the then Commission for Dialect and Name Research at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, which was later transformed into the Institute for Austrian Dialect and Name Gazetteers. From 1989 onwards and up until her retirement in 2009, she edited the Old German Names Book [Altdeutsches Namenbuch]. She was also involved into further research projects, partly conducted by herself, such as the project Alpkultur – Cultural-Historical Name Documentation in the Alpine Space, which focused on East Tyrol [Osttirol] and its namescape consisting of Germanic, Slavic and Romanic strata.

Isolde HAUSNER has been active in AKO since 1975. In 1997, she was elected chair for the first time and in 2002 for a second term. During this period (1998) Recommendation No. 46 of the Austrian Conference on Regional Planning [Österreichische Raumordnungskonferenz, ÖROK] on the standardization of geographical names in Austria was drafted. It mentions the administrative responsibilities for the various types of geographical names, thus making these responsibilities known and binding in the field of spatial planning. Another important result of their presidency was the Geographical Names Data Base Austria [Geographische Namendatenbank Österreich]. It based on the gazetteer of Josef BREU, but substantially revised and supplemented it. Above all, a new electronic publication form was chosen, i.e. CD-ROM, equipped with search functions and to be used interactively. In 2005, HAUSNER installed a working group on the revision and updating of the "Proposals for the Rendering of Geographical Names in Austrian School Atlases", which had first been published in 1994. Up to the present day she intensively contributes her knowledge to AKO.

HAUSNER was also very active internationally. Thus, until 2007, she was a Permanent Member of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names and contributed essentially to UNGEGN. She was appointed coordinator of the Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use in succession to Josef BREU and Peter RAPER. The 23rd UNGEGN Session in Vienna was certainly the highlight of her UNGEGN engagement. HAUSNER played a decisive role in bringing a UNGEGN session to Austria for the first time. Together with Peter JORDAN, she organized a UNGEGN training course preceding the Session.

In recognition of her merits, HAUSNER was awarded the title "Professor" by the Federal Minister for Education, Art and Culture in 2007.

Peter JORDAN (Austria, 1949-)

Born 1949, Peter's career has been shaped by geography and linguistics: just as polyglot Vienna is the perfect starting place for visiting South and East Europe, so Peter, especially during his early career since 1977 at the Austrian Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (AIESES) had the perfect opportunity to get to know that area and its languages well, both by visits and by mapping it: as cartographic editor he assisted Josef BREU in the production of the Atlas of the Danubian Countries. In 1989, he became head of the AIESES geography department, editor-in-chief of the Atlas of East and Southeast Europe; from 2001 to 2005 he was director of AIESES. He then transferred to the Institute of Urban and Regional Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. His experience in atlas cartography got him elected as chair of the ICA Commission on Atlases (2007-2015).

Peter acquired his PhD in 1979 on a cartographic subject and his habilitation (licence to teach) in 1998. Since 1996 he has been teaching university courses in geography and cartography, both in Austria and several Southeast European countries, and participated in research there, and its success is reflected in the fact that Peter holds honorary membership of the Austrian, Croatian, Czech, Hungarian and Romanian geographical societies, respectively. He was awarded honorary professorship at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

With this background in geography and cartography and his election at home to the chairmanship of the Austrian Board on Geographical Names in 2007, and to the post of vice-chair of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (StAGN), Peter is the perfect delegate to UNGEGN. This was recognised by his election as convenor of the Working Group on Exonyms (2006-2017); since 2006 he has organised an astonishing number of symposia, seminars and conferences on geographical names, both for his UNGEGN working group and for the joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy, which he helped to launch in 2009 – his major achievement (next to his publication record in toponymy) – and of which he is the vice-

chair and the driving force. Together with Paul WOODMAN he is editor of the toponymic book series Name & Place.

Peter has twice served DGSD as chairman: in 1986 and during the 2007-2012 term, when he organised the DGSD-GeoNames symposium in Vienna 2009 and some DGSD meetings, e.g. in Tainach, Austria, 2010.

Emil MEYNEN (Federal Republic of Germany and Germany, 1902-1994)

Born in Cologne [Köln], Emil MEYNEN was a German geographer and spatial planner. Among others, he co-edited the standard work "Handbook of Germany's natural subdivision" [Handbuch der naturräumlichen Gliederung Deutschlands]. MEYNEN studied geography, ethnology and geology in Cologne, Leipzig, Innsbruck and Berlin and completed in 1935 his habilitation work "Germany and the German Reich" [Deutschland und das Deutsche Reich] at the Cologne University. He engaged himself a.o. in the Centre of German National Research Organisations [Geschäftsstelle der Volksdeutschen Forschungsgemeinschaften] and was its head from 1934 to 1945. From 1941 onward, he also chaired the Office of Regional Studies [Amt für Landeskunde].

His geographical expertise on the Soviet Union prompted his appointment to the Chair of the Department of Regional Studies [Abteilung für Landeskunde] with the US Military Government in Germany in 1947. In 1950, he founded together with Walter CHRISTALLER and Paul GAUSS the German Association of Applied Geography [Deutscher Verband für Angewandte Geographie, DVAG]. In 1955, he was appointed Honorary Professor of the Cologne University, and in 1956 Director, Institute of Regional Studies [Institut für Landeskunde] in the Federal Agency of Regional Studies and Spatial Research [Bundesanstalt für Landeskunde und Raumforschung].

In the field of toponymy, he earned much recognition by editing the Duden Gazetteer of Europe [Duden Wörterbuch geographischer Namen. Europa] published by the Bibliographical Institute in Mannheim in 1966 containing entries of more important geographical features in all countries of Europe except the Soviet Union, describing their geographical characteristics and location as well as indicating their German exonym as well as their endonym with pronunciation. Based on this achievement, he was one of the founders of UNGEGN and the leading German UNGEGN expert for many years as well as the First Vice-President of the 2nd UNCSGN in London 1972.

Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands, 1912-2002)

Ferdinand Jan (Fer) ORMELING studied geography at Utrecht University, and taught geography at high schools 1938-42. After World War II, from 1947 to 1956 he was director of the Geographical Institute, Topographical Survey Indonesia, where, in 1955, he got his PhD at the University of Indonesia on a thesis about the economic development of Timor. From 1956 to 1964 he was atlas editor at Wolters publishing company, Groningen, Netherlands. In 1964, he was appointed Professor of Economic Geography at Amsterdam University, and in 1971 he was appointed professor of Cartography, ITC, Enschede, where he set up a new cartography department, which attracted students from all over the world and lectured until his retirement in 1982. He was both president of the Netherlands Cartographic Society and of the Royal Netherlands Geographical Society. After the successful organization of the International Cartographic Conference in Amsterdam, 1967, he was elected Secretary General and later (past) President of International Cartographic Association 1968-1988. He edited nine editions of the

Grote Bosatlas, the main school atlas of the Netherlands 1956-1976. His work as editor of this atlas got him delegated to the 1st UNCSGN in Geneva in 1967.

From the first conference in 1967 onwards, ORMELING advocated toponymic education, and he even got the Netherlands government willing to pay half the costs of a toponymy course, provided the UN would pay for the other half. When the UN withdrew their offer, the Netherlands government did likewise, but offered it again in 1975, with the same result, and it was only in 1982 that the first pilot course was realized.

ORMELING served as convenor of the Working Group on Education and Training 1973-1986 and co-organized toponymy courses in Indonesia (Cisarua 1982), Morocco (Rabat 1985) and Indonesia (Cipanas 1989).

ORMELING proposed a working group on training courses in toponymy in 1973, and was elected chair of this WG, which he led until 1987. The following resolutions on toponymic education and training were instigated by ORMELING: II-18 (on the proposed Netherlands/UN training course in 1974), III-15 (for sharing resources for the realization of toponymy courses), IV-5 (enticing universities to set up toponymy courses), IV-6 (having courses similar to the successful pilot course in Indonesia), V-21 (soliciting for courses by other divisions and VI-13, recommending UNGEGN financial support for the organization of international toponymy courses.

He also was a staunch proponent of the reduction of exonyms and as such contributed to the acceptance of resolution III-19 on the production of lists of exonyms (as a first step towards reduction) and of resolution IV-20 on the reduction of exonyms.

ORMELING chaired the DGSD 1977-1982. Within DGSD, as in ICA, he paired up very much with Rolf BÖHME and together they managed to bring about many of their initiatives. Together with Justus WEKKER, the delegate from Suriname, ORMELING organized a Dutch language toponymy course on the collecting and processing of geographical names in Suriname, including an expedition inland to collect names from the inland Maroon population.

As ICA president, ORMELING was able to help BREU to publish his elementary texts “Transcription in Toponymy” and the “Economic benefits of toponymic standardization” in the International Yearbook of Cartography.

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands, 1942-)

Born in Utrecht, The Netherlands, but grown up and partly educated in the former Dutch East Indies, today Indonesia; son of a prominent cartographer and toponymist; professor of cartography at the University of Utrecht; working in research fields ranging from atlas cartography over toponymy, data quality, cartographic education, cartographic visualization, cartographic infrastructure, maps in the media to history of cartography; essential contributor to the Atlas of the Netherlands; leading member of the International Cartographic Association (Chair, Commission on Education and Training 1987-1999, Secretary General and Treasurer 1999-2007).

Thus, what we see and note of him at UNGEGN sessions and UN conferences on the standardization of geographical names is just one aspect of his personality and a section of his tremendous scope of activities. But it is nevertheless a most essential one. It departed from his PhD thesis on the rendering of minority toponyms on maps in Western Europe (University of Utrecht), published in 1983. This profound study on a politically sensitive topic determined also his early years as a UNGEGN member. He advocated the official use of minority toponyms at a time, when the UNGEGN rule “one name for one feature” was still considered mandatory without exception and when promoting the acceptance of minority toponyms as a part of national standardization prompted reactions like “to put [by striving for this goal] the whole building of national standardization at risk” (12th UNGEGN Session 1986). It may be a great

satisfaction to him to see that in the meantime his views have widely been accepted, that many countries conduct programmes to standardize and document minority toponyms and that at the 9th UN Conference (2007) special emphasis was put on the issue that geographical names are a part of the cultural heritage and are therefore to be documented and kept in use.

But his activities within UNGEGN did not remain confined to this issue. Another important field is his engagement in toponymic training. As the convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy he did not only administer this field, but involved himself also actively in most of the training courses as an organizer and lecturer. In his function as chairman of DGSD he organized the most fruitful DGSD symposium GeoNames 2005 in Leeuwarden, the centre of the bilingual Dutch province of Friesland, devoted to the topic of minority/indigenous names and multilingual areas. Apart from UNGEGN activities in the narrower sense he published on toponymic issues like on foreign geographical names in Dutch (1996) or contributed to the “EuroGeoNames” project. His election into the office of UNGEGN vice-chair in 2007 resulted from all these merits.

Peter E. RAPER (South Africa)

Peter E. RAPER’s professional career started with his engagement in the Onomastic Research Unit of the South African Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 1970. A year later, he completed his PhD thesis on region names in Western and Southern Africa. As a linguist, he developed into one of the most productive onomasticians.

Soon after his first participation in UNGEGN sessions he became UNGEGN Chair in 1989 and conducted this forum most successfully up to 2002. In 1998, he presided also the 7th UNCSGN in New York.

In his home country, South Africa, he occupied in the course of his career multiple functions: Extraordinary Professor and scientific cooperator at the linguistic faculty of the University of the Free State, member of the South African Geographical Names Council, of the South African Academy of Science and Art, of the National Place Names Committee of South Africa as well as President and Honorary Member of the Names Society of Southern Africa.

On the international scene, he is also member of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences and the American Name Society as well as of the steering board of the Joint ICA/IGU Commission on Toponymy. Together with Lucie MÖLLER and Theodorus DU PLESSIS he edited the standard work "Dictionary of Southern African Place Names".

Jörn SIEVERS (Federal Republic of Germany and Germany, 1942-)

Professionally based at the German Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy [Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie, BKG], earlier Institute of Applied Geodesy [Institut für Angewandte Geodäsie, IfAG] in Frankfurt am Main, he invested much interest in names research into the Antarctica as well as in the standardization of geographical names, the latter at the level of Germany and the German-speaking countries as well as within the various bodies of the United Nations. There, he knew to impress by his diplomatic skills as well as by pursuing goals very consequently and efficiently. German research into the Antarctica received out of his hands the “Register of German Geographical Names in Antarctica”.

Since 1987 he functioned as member, since 1994 as Chair of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, the geographical names board for Germany with a coordinative function for all German-speaking countries. Since 1989 he represented Germany in UNGEGN sessions and in UN conferences on the standardization of geographical names, between 1994 and 2000 also as Chair of DGSD. It was mainly due to his efforts that the 8th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the 22nd UNGEGN Session in 2002 were

awarded to Berlin and it was him, who chaired the organizing committee of this conference – an event that remained in best memory with all of us, not the least due to its most attractive social programme and its exceptional exhibition. At this same event, Jörn SIEVERS was elected UNGEGN Vice-Chair, a function he maintained until summer 2007. Later, he invested much energy into the EU-funded project “EuroGeoNames” aiming at the development of a European names infrastructure. He still functions as Honorary Chair, Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, and plays a very active role in it.

3 DGSD participation in UNCSGN and UNGEGN sessions

The following list mentions conference or session officers as well as participants from DGSD countries. Three cities in DGSD countries (Geneva 1967, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1989, 1991, 1996; Berlin 2002; Vienna 2006, 2011) hosted UNCSGN or UNGEGN sessions so far.

1st UNCSGN, Geneva, 4-22 September 1967

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

Belgium: M.H.J. VAN DE WIJER

M.J.H. HERBILLON

Federal Republic of Germany:

Emil MEYNEN

A. GRUESSNER

F. HOFFMANN

W. EGGER

Netherlands:

Fer ORMELING sen.

Henri Nellius DAHLBERG

Dirk Pieter BLOK

Switzerland:

Ernst SPIESS

Armin BLEUER

Ernest SCHÜLÉ

1st UNGEGN Session, Geneva, 22 September 1967

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

Belgium: M.H.J. VAN DE WIJER

M.J.H. HERBILLON

Federal Republic of Germany:

Emil MEYNEN

A. GRUESSNER

F. HOFFMANN

W. EGGER

Netherlands:

Fer ORMELING sen.

Henri Nellius DAHLBERG

Dirk Pieter BLOK

Switzerland:

Ernst SPIESS

Armin BLEUER

Ernest SCHÜLÉ

2nd UNGEGN Session, New York, 10-20 March 1970

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

Federal Republic of Germany:

Emil MEYNEN

3rd UNGEGN Session, New York, 2-12 February 1971

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

Federal Republic of Germany:

Emil MEYNEN

H. SCHAMP

Netherlands:

Fer ORMELING sen. (Division chair)

Dirk Pieter BLOK

4th UNGEGN Session, London, 9 May and 1 June 1972

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

Federal Republic of Germany:

Emil MEYNEN (Division chair)

Netherlands:

Fer ORMELING sen.

Dirk Pieter BLOK

2nd UNCSGN, London, 10-31 May 1972

First Vice-President: Emil MEYNEN (Federal Republic of Germany)

5th UNGEGN Session, New York, 5-16 March 1973

No participation data available

6th UNGEGN Session, New York, 5-26 March 1975

Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Education and Training

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

German Democratic Republic:

Erfried HAACK

Federal Republic of Germany:

Emil MEYNEN

Netherlands:

Fer ORMELING sen. (Division chair)

Dirk Pieter BLOK

7th UNGEGN Session, Athens, 16 August and 8 September 1977

Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Education and Training

Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany) Convenor, Working Group on Automated Data Processing

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

German Democratic Republic:

Erfried HAACK

Federal Republic of Germany:

Emil MEYNEN (Division chair)

Netherlands:

Dirk Pieter BLOK

3rd UNCSGN, Athens, 17 August – 7 September 1977

Erfried HAACK (German Democratic Republic) Vice-Chair, Technical Committee IV

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU

Belgium: Julien J.J. VEREERSTRAETEN

J. VAN DEN BRANDEN

German Democratic Republic:

Erfried HAACK

Reginald PUSTKOWSKI
Hans ZIKMUND
Federal Republic of Germany:
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Werner BETTAC
Rolf BÖHME
J. STOFFELS
Karl-August WEGENER
C. PAULS
Karl-August SEEL

Netherlands:
Dirk Pieter BLOK

8th UNGEGN Session, New York, 26 February – 9 March 1979

Josef BREU (Austria) UNGEGN Chair
Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Education and Training
Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany) Convenor, Working Group on Automated Data Processing
No participation data available

9th UNGEGN Session, New York, 17-27 February 1981

Josef BREU (Austria) UNGEGN Chair
Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Education and Training
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Dirk Pieter BLOK

10^h UNGEGN Session, Geneva, 23 August and 15 September 1982

Dirk Pieter BLOK (Netherlands) UNGEGN Chair
Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Education and Training
Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany) Convenor, Working Group on Automated Data Processing
Josef BREU (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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Netherlands:
Dirk Pieter BLOK

Switzerland:
Rudolf KNÖPFLI

4th UNCSGN, Geneva, 24 August – 14 September 1982

President: Dirk Pieter BLOK (Netherlands)

Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany) Vice-Chair, Technical Committee II
Josef BREU (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors
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Rolf BÖHME

Karl-August WEGENER

Herbert LIEDTKE

Netherlands:

Dirk Pieter BLOK

Switzerland:

Rudolf KNÖPFLI

Jean-Claude STOTZER

Peter GLATTHARD

11th UNGEGN Session, Geneva, 15-23 October 1984

Dirk Pieter BLOK (Netherlands) UNGEGN Chair

Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Education and
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Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany), Convenor, Working Group on
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Federal Republic of Germany:

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Ernst Alois SCHMIDT

Netherlands:

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Fer ORMELING sen.

Ferjan ORMELING jun.

South Africa:

Peter R. RAPER

Switzerland:

Rudolf KNÖPFLI

12th UNGEGN Session, Geneva, 29 September – 7 October 1986

Dirk Pieter BLOK (Netherlands) UNGEGN Chair

Fer ORMELING sen. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Education and
Training

Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany), Convenor, Working Group on
Automated Data Processing

Josef BREU (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors
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Berthold JOHANNES

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South Africa:

Peter R. RAPER

Switzerland:

Rudolf KNÖPFLI

13th UNGEGN Session, Montreal, 17 and 31 August 1987

Josef BREU (Austria) Co-convenor, Working Group on a Single Romanization System for Each Non-Roman Writing System

Josef BREU (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU (Division chair)

German Democratic Republic:

Erfried HAACK

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Dirk Pieter BLOK

South Africa:

Peter R. RAPER

5th UNCSGN, Montreal, 18-31 August 1987

Rolf BÖHME (Federal Republic of Germany) Vice-Chair, Technical Committee II

Josef BREU (Austria) Vice-Chair, Technical Committee III

Participants: Austria: Josef BREU (Division chair)

German Democratic Republic:

Erfried HAACK

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Rolf BÖHME

Netherlands:

Dirk Pieter BLOK

South Africa:

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Switzerland:

Théodore PORTIER

14th UNGEGN Session, Geneva, 17-26 May 1989

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Peter RAPER (South Africa) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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Oliver SCHNACKENBERG

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Peter R. RAPER

Switzerland:

Ernst SPIESS (Division chair)

15th UNGEGN Session, Geneva, 11-20 November 1991

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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Michael FLÜGGER

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South Africa:

Peter R. RAPER

Switzerland:

Ernst SPIESS

Rudolf KNÖPFLI

16th UNGEGN Session, New York, 24 August and 4 September 1992

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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Fer ORMELING sen. (Division chair)

Peter R. POST

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Peter R. RAPER

Switzerland:

Ernst SPIESS

6th UNCSGN, New York, 25 August – 3 September 1992

Ernst SPIESS (Switzerland) Vice-Chair, Technical Committee I

Peter E. RAPER (South Africa) Chair, Technical Committee III

Participants: Austria: Helmut DESOYE

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Michael BIONTINO

Jörn SIEVERS
Karl-August SEEL
Netherlands:
Fer ORMELING sen. (Division chair)
Peter R. POST
South Africa:
Peter R. RAPER
Switzerland:
Ernst SPIESS

17th UNGEGN Session, New York, 13-24 June 1994

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses
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South Africa:
Peter R. RAPER

18th UNGEGN Session, Geneva, 12-23 August 1996

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses
in Toponymy
Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other
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Peter R. RAPER
Lucie MÖLLER
Switzerland:
Jean-Claude STOTZER
Ernst SPIESS

19th UNGEGN Session, New York, 12 and 23 January 1998

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses
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Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other
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7th UNCSGN, New York, 13-22 January 1998

President: Peter E. RAPER (South Africa)
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Chair, Technical Committee III
Participants: Austria: Isolde HAUSNER

Belgium: Dirk WOUTERS
Kathleen VAN DOREN
Hugo BRAUWERS

Germany:
Rainald Roesch
Jörn SIEVERS (Division chair)
Thomas ZIELKE

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A.P.T BIJLSMA
A.M.C. WESTER

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Peter R. RAPER
Lucie MÖLLER

Switzerland:
Livia Leu AGOSTI

20th UNGEGN Session, New York, 17-28 January 2000

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses
in Toponymy
Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other
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Christian SCHLEITHOFF
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Bernd BEINSTEIN

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L.Ch.J.D. SCHILLINGS
A.P. VALKENBURG

SOUTH AFRICA:
P.W. MTHEMBEU
L.F. METHENJWA

Switzerland:
Martin GURTNER
Hans Rudolf MÖSCHING

21th UNGEGN Session, Berlin, 26 August and 6 September 2002

Peter RAPER (South Africa) UNGEGN Chair

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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Armgard WIPPLER

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M.T. KUBHEKHA

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Victor MDWARA

Switzerland:

Martin GURTNER

Hans Rudolf MÖSCHING

8th UNCSGN, Berlin, 27 August – 5 September 2002

President: Klaus-Henning ROSEN (Germany)

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Chair, Technical Committee III

Participants: Austria: Isolde HAUSNER

Markus LUTTEROTTI

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Bernd MÜTZELBURG

Klaus-Henning ROSEN

Peter WITTIG

Dietmar GRÜNREICH

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Armgard WIPPLER

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L.F. METHENJWA
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Peter R. RAPER
Victor MDWARA

Switzerland:

Martin GURTNER
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22nd UNGEGN Session, New York, 20-29 April 2004

Jörn SIEVERS (Germany) UNGEGN Vice-Chair
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses
in Toponymy

Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other
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South Africa:

Dumisani KUMALO
Tommy NTSEWA
Gerald Vusithemba NDIMA
Mbogiseni Trueman KUBHEKHA
Thulile ZUNGU

23rd UNGEGN Session, Vienna, 28 March – 4 April 2006

Jörn SIEVERS (Germany) UNGEGN Vice-Chair
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses
in Toponymy

Peter JORDAN (Austria) Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms

Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other
Editors for International Use

Participants: Austria: Isolde HAUSNER (Division chair)

Peter JORDAN
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Hubert BERGMANN
Anita CSENAR
Michael FUHRMANN
Georg GARTNER
Johann SEEDOCH
Gunter STEFANITS
Josef VLASITS
Markus JOBST
Sandra BARTHEL
Christoph FINK
Stoyan KOLEV
Stefan ROPAC
Leonhard SUCHENWIRTH

Mihaly SZABO
Lukas BIRSAK
Johannes MAYER
Rudolf VOIT

Germany:

Dietmar GRÜNREICH
Jörn SIEVERS
Pier-Giorgio ZACCHEDDU
Bernd BEINSTEIN
Petra ARNHOLD

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John SIKHOSANA
Gerald Vusithemba NDIMA
Mbogiseni Trueman KUBHEKHA
Thulile ZUNGU
Victor MDWARA

Switzerland:

Martin GURTNER
Hans Rudolf MÖSCHING

24th UNGEGN Session, New York, 20 and 31 August 2007

Jörn SIEVERS (Germany) UNGEGN Vice-Chair
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses
in Toponymy
Peter JORDAN (Austria) Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms
Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other
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Ulrike NGUYEN

Belgium: Oliver BELLE

Marcus LEROY
Christine DETAILLE
Kathleen VAN DOREN

Germany:

Victoria ZIMMERMANN VON SIEFART
Jörn SIEVERS
Pier-Giorgio ZACCHEDDU

Netherlands:

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South Africa:

John SIKHOSANA
Gerald Vusithemba NDIMA
Mbogiseni Trueman KUBHEKHA
Mpho Patricia MATANE

9th UNCSGN, New York, 21-30 August 2007

Jörn SIEVERS (Germany) Chair, Technical Committee II
Peter JORDAN (Austria) Vice-Chair, Technical Committee III
Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Chair, Technical Committee IV
Participants: Austria: Peter JORDAN (Division chair)
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Ulrike NGUYEN

Belgium: Oliver BELLE
Marcus LEROY
Christine DETAILLE
Kathleen VAN DOREN

Germany:
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Netherlands:
Ferjan ORMELING jun.

South Africa:
John SIKHOSANA
Gerald Vusithemba NDIMA
Mbogiseni Trueman KUBHEKHA
Mpho Patricia MATANE

25th UNGEGN Session, Nairobi, 5-12 May 2009

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) UNGEGN Vice-Chair and Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Peter JORDAN (Austria) Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms

Isolde HAUSNER (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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South Africa:
Tommy NTSEWA
Mbogiseni Trueman KUBHEKHA
Mthembu PHAKAMANI
Mudau RENDANI

26th UNGEGN Session, Vienna, 2-6 May 2011

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) UNGEGN Vice-Chair and Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Peter JORDAN (Austria) Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms

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Isolde HAUSNER

Roman STANI-FERTL

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Bernd BEINSTEIN

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Tjeerd TICHELAAR

Suriname:

Hein RAGHOEBAR

Switzerland:

Jean-Christophe GUÉLAT

27th UNGEGN Session, New York, 30 July and 10 August 2012

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) UNGEGN Vice-Chair and Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Peter JORDAN (Austria) Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms

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Miguel BERGER

Peter SILBERBERG

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Alle DORHOUT

Tjeerd TICHELAAR

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K.R. SIZANI

Mbogiseni Trueman KUBHEKHA

10th UNCSGN, New York, 31 July – 9 August 2012

Pier-Giorgio ZACCHEDDU (Germany) Chair, Technical Committee I

Peter JORDAN (Austria) Vice-Chair, Technical Committee III

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) Chair, Technical Committee IV

Participants: Austria: Peter JORDAN

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Miguel BERGER

Peter SILBERBERG

Pier-Giorgio ZACCHEDDU (Division chair)

Helge PAULIG

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Mbogiseni Trueman KUBHEKHA

28th UNGEGN Session, New York, 28 April – 2 May 2014

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) UNGEGN Vice-Chair and Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Peter JORDAN (Austria) Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms

Pier-Giorgio ZACCHEDDU (Germany) Convenor, Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Hubert BERGMANN (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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Heiko THOMS

Pier-Giorgio ZACCHEDDU (Division chair)

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Tjeerd TICHELAAR

29th UNGEGN Session, Bangkok, 25-29 April 2016

Ferjan ORMELING jun. (Netherlands) UNGEGN Vice-Chair and Convenor, Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Peter JORDAN (Austria) Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms

Pier-Giorgio ZACCHEDDU (Germany) Convenor, Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Tjeerd TICHELAAR (Netherlands) Convenor, Working Group on Pronunciation

Gerhard RAMPL (Austria) Coordinator, Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use

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Bernhard D.S. KELKES

Tjeerd TICHELAAR

South Africa:

Robina P. MARKS

Ramphelane Johnny BOPHELO MOHALA

Phakamani Walter NORMAN MTHEMBU

Deon SEALS

4 Organisation of GeoNames symposia, publication of proceedings

Besides its engagement in UNGEGN sessions and UNCSGN, DGSD developed since 1996 also a tradition of organizing international toponymic symposia titled „GeoNames“. So far, the following events took place with the respective proceedings being published:

Symposium on Geographical Names, Vienna, 10-11 October 1996 (the 1st GeoNames, but with a slightly different title)

On the occasion of the 100th meeting of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (StAGN) and the millennium of Austria the symposium was organized by StAGN and the Austrian Board on Geographical Names (AKO) and took place in the Federal Office of

Metrology and Surveying [Bundesamt für Eich- und Vermessungswesen, BEV]. Eleven lectures were held to five subject areas, which comprised the whole field of geographical names standardization. The organizers prepared an exhibition about the activities and products of various institutions of Austria and Germany dealing with geographical names. On the second day of the conference a bus excursion led to the multilingual area of Burgenland with Croatian and Hungarian minorities. An introduction into the problems of multilingual areas and further special information were given by the director of the Burgenland Provincial Archive [Burgenländisches Landesarchiv] as well as by the mayors of the respective municipalities.

Proceedings:

KRETSCHMER, Ingrid; DESOYE, Helmut; KRIZ, Karel (eds.) (1997), *Kartographie und Namenstandardisierung* (= Wiener Schriften zur Geographie und Kartographie, 10). Wien, Institut für Geographie und Regionalforschung der Universität Wien, *Kartographie und Geoinformation*.

GeoNames 2000: “Second International Symposium on Geographical Names”, Frankfurt am Main, 28-30 March 2000

The Second International Symposium on Geographical Names "GeoNames 2000" was held in Frankfurt am Main to endorse and support the United Nations in their efforts to promote standardization in toponymy as well as to prepare topics for further discussion at the Eighth Conference.

The symposium focussed on the difficult and dualistic problem of avoiding the use of exonyms for the reason of being unequivocal in cartography as well as recommending their use if they form living and vital parts of languages, thus fostering the mother tongue. Similar considerations would be dedicated to the question of applying romanization systems for transcribing names from non-Roman scripts to the Roman alphabet. Furthermore, the items “concepts of names data bases” and “status of national standardization” were dealt with as well as the implications of the orthographic reform of the German language on the spelling of geographical names. The theme “pronunciation as an aid to the correct spelling of foreign names and its rendering on the Internet”, was treated in conjunction with a visit to the broadcasting station Hessischer Rundfunk, including a lecture on and a demonstration of the pronunciation data base of the German broadcasting association ARD.

The symposium was supported by the DGSD, the Working Committee of the State Survey Offices of the Federal Republic of Germany [Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Vermessungsverwaltungen der Länder der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, AdV], the German Society for Cartography [Deutsche Gesellschaft für Kartographie, DGfK], the Austrian Board on Geographical Names [Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kartographische Ortsnamenkunde, AKO], the Dutch Language Committee [Nederlandse Taalunie], the German broadcasting station Hessischer Rundfunk, and the publisher of German language dictionaries “Dudenredaktion”. More than 75 participants from 23 countries attended the symposium.

Proceedings:

SIEVERS, Jörn (ed.) (2000), *Second International Symposium on Geographical Names – GeoNames 2000* (= Mitteilungen des Bundesamts für Kartographie und Geodäsie, 19). Frankfurt am Main, Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie.

GeoNames 2001: “International Workshop on GeoNames 2001”, Berchtesgaden, 1-2 October 2001

Under the auspices of DGSD the workshop GeoNames 2001 devoted to the function and meaning of exonyms was held in Berchtesgaden (Germany). Already the Second International Symposium on Geographical Names GeoNames 2000, held in Frankfurt am Main

in March 2000, had raised this subject. Its scope was not wide enough, however, for a detailed discussion. GeoNames 2001 offered such another opportunity. It was accepted by 22 participants not only from DGSD member countries, but also from Canada, Estonia, France, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

GeoNames 2005: “Minority Names/Indigenous Names and Multilingual Areas”, Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, 14-16 April 2005

This symposium on minority names, indigenous names and multilingual areas was held in the capital of the Frisian minority language area in the Netherlands. Frisia provided a fitting location for illustrating this theme and the developments that are taking place. Right up to the 1990s there were internal regulations for the Topographic Survey in the Netherlands that forced topographers collecting geographical names in that area to translate them into the Dutch majority language. Since then, much has changed. In the major part of Frisia, municipalities now standardise the geographical names within their area in Frisian, and these Frisian name versions are now incorporated by the Topographic Survey in its maps and databases.

This was reflected in the papers in the conference’s first session, on the rendering and use of minority language geographical names in Frisia. The other sessions dealt with the collection and processing of minority geographical names, their reparation, the legal aspects involved in recognizing minority names or indigenous names, bilingual mapping in multilingual areas, minority names outreach programmes, and finally the future trends as we expect them now: developments in dealing with minority names, and the intended activities of the new working group.

The venue of the conference was the premises of the Fryske Akademy, the research institute for the Frisian minority language and culture, which is an affiliate of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences. The conference was further sponsored by the Nederlandse Taalunie (the supranational institution in charge of all matters regarding the Dutch language, in which Belgium, the Netherlands and Suriname cooperate), the Frisian provincial government, which graciously held a reception for the conference, Versloot Kartografy, which supplied the maps for the excursion and by Utrecht University. The UNGEGN bureau helped to publicize the event, and the staff at the Fryske Akademy helped with the registration and the catering.

Proceedings:

Proceedings of the International Conference on Minority Names/Indigenous Names and Multilingual Areas, Geonames 2005, Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, Frisia, The Netherlands, April 14-16, 2005

GeoNames 2008: “Geographical Names as a Part of the Cultural Heritage”, Vienna, 19-21 May 2008

The symposium was organized by the Austrian Board on Geographical Names (AKO) and took place at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. 83 experts from 24 countries took part. The event saw 31 papers from 21 countries presented. As major conclusions, the following could be mentioned:

- **Place names are an important part of the cultural heritage.** Traditional geographical names are partly very old, have been attributed to features in a certain linguistic, political, social and economic situation and have partly been preserved also by succeeding languages. They are therefore a key to settlement and cultural history. They tell a lot about the character and the essence of a place, and its former economic and linguistic situations. They form an inter-related system of names in a certain region, a “place-name landscape”, describing historical, but very often still existing situations. Place names support space-related identity building. Mentioning or remembering the name of a familiar place evokes a whole set of thoughts of that place, and expresses or

confirms the emotional relation of a person to a place. Geographical names are therefore an important element of feeling at home, not least for linguistic minorities.

- **Special protection is needed** for names in minority languages, names in other declining languages and also in dialects, the latter being subject to a significant erosion process due to the spatial expansion of personal communication networks, the power of nationwide media and trends towards cultural globalisation. Also exonyms need protection, since they are very often not standardised and not systematically documented. When documenting them, it is important to refer them as well as other variant names to the standardised endonym.
- **Dangers to which geographical names are exposed** are partly provoked by the strong symbolic power of place names. Place names are frequently interpreted as a claim for dominance over a certain region or country. The dominant force in a society wants to have definitive power over geographical names. Changes in dominance (at all spatial scales, from the country down to the level of small populated places; also, e.g., from the political to the economic sphere) may result in renaming. Other dangers emerge from inadequate legislation in the protection of names, the loss of knowledge of particular names, the changing way of life from rural to urban, the loss of oral traditions due to a lack of recording, globalisation and the influence of other cultures as well as indiscriminate renaming and perpetuation of incorrect or incorrectly spelt versions of names.

Proceedings:

JORDAN, Peter; BERGMANN, Hubert; CHEETHAM, Catherine; HAUSNER, Isolde (eds.) (2009), Geographical Names as a Part of the Cultural Heritage (= Wiener Schriften zur Geographie und Kartographie, 18). Wien, Institut für Geographie und Regionalforschung der Universität Wien, Kartographie und Geoinformation, 196 p.