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**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).**

Standardization of geographical names in Mongolia between 2008- 2012

Submitted by Mongolia**

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Standardization of geographical names
In Mongolia between 2008- 2012 /Agenda 4/

1. Measures to protect and keep geographical names in Mongolia

Regulations on “Prohibition of changing geographical names arbitrarily” and “Establishment of territorial committee ” were approved and missions on determining and collecting geographical names were given to local administrative organization first in 1949, 1961 in Mongolia.

During implementation of above mentioned regulations, geographical site names in 18 provinces /former municipal units/ were started to collect but field clarification around statewide has not performed and commission for geographical site names could not work effectively.

In 1970, Administration of State Geodesy and Cartography /former/ has established and then it has considered issues related to geographical names, by the year of 1980, it has established “Permanent commission for State territorial names” and determined geographical names and terminologies for statewide and marked in the map. It started to determine and define geographical names all around the country in order to stop making changes on geographical names by own in future.

In order to implement above regulations, it has done field studies on all territories of Mongolia in 1980-1985 and determined more than 240 thousands geographical names and marked for 1210 sheets map with scale of 1:100 000 in topographic map and discussed and approved by local municipal administrations of soum, province and Permanent commission for State geographical names /former/. These names are reflected on geodesy, mapping activity and used in geographical maps and atlases.

But within this period, determined names have been little focused on using them equally around statewide and therefore correct geographical names were not always used.

Since 1990, Mongolia has shifted into market economy and the commission for state geographical names had no possibility to perform its operation same as most of organizations. Therefore, any activities regarding geographical names have not done for last 20 years.

But clause of geographical names has inserted in section 11, law of “Geodesy and cartography” which approved in 1998.

In this law depicted “statewide geographical names shall be approved by Mongolian parliament” which presumed as our contribution.

During implementation of this law in 2004 Mongolian parliament approved total of 213 thousands of geographical names determined and collected during 1980- 1990.

At the first time in its history Mongolia has acquired official guarantee for geographical names and in a result parliament shall discuss and approve new names and their changes once in every 4 years.

Since 1990, Mongolia has shifted into new society with market economy and lots of changes have been made in economic and social development. As a result of migration from rural to urban areas

caused disappearance and changes of geographical names, and also replacement of geographical names by new ones.

2. Regarding works performed in 2007-2012 for standardization of geographical names

We have concluded that Administration of Land Affairs, Construction, Geodesy and Cartography made some progress on standardization of geographical names but with slow speed.

Since 2009 ALACGaC has been proposed the government to establish “National council for geographic names” through Ministry of Road, Transport, and Urban Development of Mongolia but it was rejected due to non-stated in the related law.

However, since 2010, ALACGaC has done research on “package land laws of Mongolia” to make changes on it and decided to make some changes in law of Geodesy and Cartography, which is a part of package laws.

In a result of discussing issues of “establish national council for geographic names”, and “establish national council for topographic infrastructure” ALACGaC, as responsible for geographical names of the state, has reflected these issues on updated version of Geodesy and Cartography law.

This law is in process to be discussed in parliament meeting. Even though we are waiting for it to be proved through parliament session, our organization has been executing following works:

1. As a result of translating occupational guidance for standardization of geographical names, the clarification instruction of Mongolian geographical names has been generated.
2. Since March, 2012, ALACGaC has started to determine geographical names clarification in 3 provinces starting from eastern part of Mongolia.
3. Within range of work to determine coordinates of border points of Mongolian municipal units, we have planned to perform work identification of geographical names and determination of their coordinates along state border in 2011-2013 and this work has been successfully implementing.

During the year of 2007-2011 ALACGaC has started updating maps for 1210 sheets with scale of 1:100 000 from eastern part of Mongolia and determined names of topographical elements such as wells, fountains, pasture places, settlements and villages, their purposes, changes of industrial places, changes of municipal units etc., by conducting field studies and defined their coordinates and included in topographical maps.

Number of geographical names, determined 30 years ago by using field study, is relatively few for our territory with 1 565 000 square km area and therefore there had a demand to conduct field study to mark them on topographic maps with scales of 1:50000-1:25000, and to redefine previously defined geographical names in detail.

Within range of midterm sustainable development plan, Mongolia has started Great Construction efforts in 2011 and within range of this work it has planned to build railroads and auto roads through horizontal and vertical axis of territory of Mongolia.

In connection Mongolia has started to make topographic maps with scales of 1:25 000-1:50 000 of up to 45% territory of Mongolia based on aerial and satellite image processing. Within range of this work has performed determining of geographical names of the region in accordance with standardization of geographical names.

In addition, we have been cooperating with NGA organization of USA to implement a project for processing high resolution satellite images and making topographic maps with scales of 1:50 000 along state borders and this project will be implemented within 4 years.

In connection with the implementation of this project, tests and studies have been conducting to create information database for containing statewide geographical names in accordance with training for establishing information database for geographical names.

Also in 2007 – 2011 topographical maps with scale of 1:100 000, covering all territory of Mongolia, converted into digital form which presumed significant success in the industry.

As a result of Mongolia shifted into market economy the economic use of land has been intensified. Therefore, it is important to know or determine geographical names of the land in order to exactly determine borders, sizes and boundaries of the land.

Also within last 2 years Mongolia has detected many mineral mines and attracted interests of many foreign and domestic investors and therefore need to determine their geographical names and historic significances.

Within last 20 years number of people, who knew names of their lands and terrains has been decreased and therefore need to organize steps to pass and leave old geographical names to young generation and prevent these names from forgetting or disappearing.

As above mentioned Mongolians have nomadic culture and tradition which created a lot of historic collections of geographical names and therefore our main objective is to prevent these names from forgetting or disappearing and refresh old historic names.

As a result of establishing National council for geographic names we could implement objectives proposed by UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names and define standard for Geographical Names in Mongolia which comply international standard requirements and cooperate with other countries in relation to geographic names.