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**11<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the  
Standardization of Geographical Names**  
New York, 8 -17 August 2017  
Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*  
**Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts  
on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and  
task teams since the Tenth Conference**

**Report of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division of UNGEGN**

Submitted by Dutch- and German-speaking Division\*\*

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## **Introduction**

As a result of collaboration between experts from Austria, Germany, Netherlands and Switzerland, this document reports the Dutch- and German-speaking Division's<sup>1</sup> achievements since the last United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) held in New York in 2012.

It should be stated, that most activities in this report were conducted by the Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN, "Permanent Committee on Geographical Names"), the cooperation body of the German-speaking countries, and by the Dutch Language Union, the Taalunie.

In accordance with the procedure in use within the Division, the achievements have been reported under the headings of the relevant resolutions adopted by the various UNCSGN.

The following DGSD members are in charge of official functions within UNGEGN:

- Dipl.-Ing. Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu (DE) is the current DGSD chair and is the Convenor of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers of UNGEGN since 2009. He was Co-Convenor from 2007 to 2009;
- Dr. Gerhard Rampl (AT) is the coordinator for the Toponymic Guidelines of UNGEGN since 2014. Before that Dr. Hubert Bergmann (AT) and Dr. Isolde Hausner had been the coordinators;
- Prof. Peter Jordan (AT) is the Convenor of the Working Group on Exonyms of UNGEGN since 2012. He was Co-Convenor from 2006 to 2012;
- Prof. Ferjan Ormeling (NL) is the Vice Chairperson of UNGEGN since 2007 and is Convenor of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy of UNGEGN since 1992;
- Tjeerd Tichelaar (NL) is the Convenor of the Working Group Pronunciation of UNGEGN since 2014.

All DGSD members are currently actively involved and contributing to Working Groups of UNGEGN. Thus, the DGSD is one of the most active group within the UNGEGN.

### **Res. I/7 and II/19 Regional meetings**

Meetings of the Dutch- and German-Speaking Division were held in:

- New York, UN Headquarter 06-08-2012
- New York, UN Headquarter 29-04-2014
- Frankfurt am Main, BKG 06-03-2015
- Bangkok, UN Conference Centre 25-04-2016
- Frankfurt am Main, BKG 07-03-2017

### **Res. V/15: Establishment of national geographical names authorities**

The Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN, "Permanent Committee on Geographical Names") is the body responsible for the standardization of geographical names in the German-speaking area. The StAGN is an independent scientific body without sovereign functions to which in particular scientists and experts in practice from Austria, Germany, Switzerland and other German-speaking regions are affiliated.

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<sup>1</sup> DGSD

### **Res. VIII/1: Promotion of minority group and indigenous geographical names**

Frisian language minorities occur in Germany and the Netherlands. For the Frisian Language area in the Netherlands, the following measures have been taken in the respective data files and maps: the official name, whether Frisian or Dutch is presented first, while the Frisian name version is rendered in italics.

Within the American part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the following languages occur apart from Dutch: On the isles Saba and Sint-Eustatius, with the status of special municipalities of the Netherlands, English has official status. In Bonaire, the other special municipality, the Papiamentu language has official status next to Dutch. In the countries Aruba, Curacao and Sint-Maarten, independent parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Papiamentu (A+C) and English (Sint-M) have official status.

### **Res VIII/4: Exonyms**

The website (<http://over.taalunie.org/dutch-language-union>) of the Dutch Language Union (Aruba, Belgium, Curacao, Netherlands, Sint-Maarten, Suriname) has been restyled and since May 9, 2017 its section on Foreign Geographical Names (Buitenlandse aardrijkskundige namen, <http://namen.taalunie.org>) has been renewed as well. The new functionality allows for easier access both to the written forms as well as to the audio files of Dutch exonyms. The Working Group on Foreign Geographical Names of the Dutch language Union has defined the required functionality and checked the results. Its members also work at keeping the files up to date and as an extra service they try to provide endonyms for features in the news from non-Roman script areas, converted according to UN-accepted conversion systems.

The Dutch exonyms can be found at <http://namen.taalunie.org>. The goal of the website is to standardise the spelling of the names of those features for which the Dutch language has its own generally accepted forms. The basic assumptions of the list of exonyms are the following:

- Adherence to the 1947, 1996 and 2005 Spelling Acts for the Dutch language
- Adherence to UNGEGN Resolution V-15, aiming at a reduction of the use of exonyms

The website provides the Dutch versions of short and long country names, their adjectives, the names of their male and female inhabitants (singular and plural) and the endonym of the country name as well as the official language of that country. The main contents of the website is formed by Dutch versions of the names of important towns, regions and other features outside the Dutch language area.

### **Res VIII/5: Joint meetings of the linguistic/geographical divisions and working groups of the UNGEGN**

Two yearly meetings of the Working Group on Foreign Geographical Names (Werkgroep Buitenlandse Aardrijkskundige Namen) of the Dutch Language Union, in which Belgium and the Netherlands participated, were held throughout the 2012-2017 period.

The following meetings do not refer to a linguistic/geographical division. These were conducted by the Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN, "Permanent Committee on Geographical Names"), the cooperation body of the German-speaking countries:

At the 135<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN) ("Permanent Committee on Geographical Names") in Görlitz in March 2014, the StAGN organized a meeting and a bilingual symposium on geographical names at the Polish-German border together with the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland.

In conjunction with the 139<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN) ("Permanent Committee on Geographical Names") in Graz (AT) in March 2016, the AKO organized together with the Styrian Provincial Archive a symposium on "Minority toponyms in Slovenia, adjacent bilingual areas and German-speaking countries", to which Slovenian experts contributed by presenting papers.

#### **Res VIII/12: Standardization of names of countries**

An updated list of country names in German language was published by StAGN as 13<sup>th</sup> edition as of January 2014. The list is a synopsis of country names officially issued by the Foreign Ministries of the three countries, supplemented with comments made by StAGN.