



Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CONF.74/L.21 (Abstract)
1 July 1982

ENGLISH AND SPANISH ONLY

Fourth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names
Geneva, 24 August-14 September 1982
Item 5 (e) of the provisional agenda*

NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION: TOPONYMIC GUIDELINES

Toponymic guidelines for cartography - France**

Paper presented by France

SUMMARY

1. Acting on a proposal by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, the Toponymy Commission of the National Geographical Institute has prepared a mapping toponymy guide.
2. The initial objective was to facilitate a clear understanding by foreign readers of the names appearing on maps by providing both elements of pronunciation and indications of the mapping standards used.
3. It quickly became apparent that a sizable work was required to provide thorough coverage of a subject which dealt with areas as different as cartography and onomastics. In its current form, therefore, this mapping toponymy guide is merely a summary in terms of both the explanatory material and the actual choice of subjects, which have intentionally been limited to the most important ones.

* E/CONF.74/1.

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4. An introduction dealing with the linguistic situation of France is followed by a description of the standards used in the presentation of place-names on maps. Rules for transcribing names that derive from the same Romance root, as do most French names, are then explained. Finally consideration is given to the general characteristics of each of the following non-Romance languages: Alsatian, Basque, Breton, Corsican and Flemish, as well as to the principal rules for transcribing them in place names.
