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REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS
AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Report by the German Democratic Republic**

Paper presented by the German Democratic Republic

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Since the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (Athens, 1977) the following work has been carried out in the German Democratic Republic for a further standardization of the spelling of geographical names:

1. The "Instruction on the Spelling of Geographical Names in Cartographical Products of the German Democratic Republic" (hereinafter referred to as "Instruction") constitutes the most important foundation for a standardized spelling of geographical names in the German Democratic Republic.

The necessity for a permanent updating and more precise rendering results from the importance the Instruction has in the field of map-making. However, the application of the Instruction is not limited to the production of cartographical products. It is used in other sectors, too: government authorities and institutions, publishing houses, the press, radio and television. The seventh revised edition of the Instruction was published in 1979.

Both the general rules for the spelling of geographical names and the rules for exceptions had been revised and updated before the seventh edition was brought out. An example of the results those efforts bore is the gradual reduction in the number of exonyms used (double designations). The preparations for an eighth revised edition are under way.

2. "The General Directions for the Spelling of Geographical Names of the German Democratic Republic" constitute the basis for a standardized rendering of the names of geographical features located on the national territory of the German Democratic Republic.

In the period under review, a third revised edition of the General Directions was published in 1979. The spelling rules to be applied have been formulated in a more precise way, and a number of geographical names of certain tourist regions have been added.

Other activities, which came to an end in 1981, dealt with a standardized spelling of the geographical names of the coastal waters of the German Democratic Republic. The geographical names of the coastal regions of the German Democratic Republic refer to names of sea areas, such as bays, sea-inlets on the Baltic Sea (bodden); names of forms of submarine reliefs, such as banks, reefs, off-shore spits and shallows, as well as names of islands, peninsulas, places, capes and groynes. The names were entered on special maps to the scale of 1/100,000 and 1/200,000, which also indicated the extension of the features concerned. In addition, the work for a standardized rendering of regional geographical names of the German Democratic Republic came to an end in 1982. The term "regional geographical names" relates to names of landscapes, mountain ranges, ridges and lowlands. Those names were represented on a survey map to the scale of 1/750,000. The extension of the geographical features was also entered on that map.

3. In order to standardize further the spelling of names of geographical features located outside the national territory of the German Democratic Republic, the work on the series "General Directions for the Spelling of Geographical Names of Individual Countries" (hereinafter referred to as "General Directions"), which was

first published in 1967, had been systematically continued. In the period under review, such General Directions were established for the following countries: Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Ireland, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Socialist Republic of Romania, Switzerland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Parts I and II. (The countries have been listed in accordance with the chronological sequence in which the General Directions were published.) Thus, General Directions for 24 European countries have been established so far. A systematic updating of the General Directions has already begun. In 1981, the second revised edition of the "General Directions for the Spelling of Geographical Names of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic" was published.

The preparations for the publication of the General Directions for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Part III, the Hungarian People's Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are under way.

In drawing up the General Directions, special attention was given to the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names. Thus, the transliteration system for the Bulgarian language adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (Athens, 1977) (resolution No. 10) was first used in the German Democratic Republic in the "General Directions for the Spelling of Geographical Names of the People's Republic of Bulgaria", first edition, Berlin 1979.

4. In the period under review, the German Democratic Republic participated in the eighth and ninth sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (New York, 1979, 1981) and presented progress reports as well as working papers on a number of items of the agenda of those sessions. In addition, the German Democratic Republic participated in the work done by the regional language groups set up within the framework of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names: German Democratic Republic representatives attended the meetings of the Dutch German Language Group and the German Democratic Republic sent observers to the meetings of the Regional Language Group Eastern, Central and South-eastern Europe, as well as to those for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

5. All things considered, it can be said that the German Democratic Republic is successfully implementing the resolutions of the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (Athens, 1977). This applies primarily to resolutions 2 to 5, 8 to 13, 16, 17 and 20 adopted by the above Conference. The documents published in the German Democratic Republic, under the auspices of the Administration for Surveying and Cartography of the Ministry of the Interior, have contributed to a further standardization of the spelling of geographical names. This work will systematically and uninterruptedly be continued.
