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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 Israel**

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As regards toponymy Israel is in a very favourable position. There exists a very active Board of Geographical Names within the Office of the Prime Minister, with a firm and extensive authority in toponomastic matters, lately confirmed by the High Court of Justice. The National mapping agency, the "Survey of Israel", meticulously adheres to the use of official names. Israel has a single official system of romanization for the official Hebrew geographical names, ratified by the Knesset (Parliament), and adopted by resolution by the Third UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Athens, 1977. All official romanized maps are printed in this transliteration, with the condensed transliteration rules being provided free with each non-Hebrew map, in the form of a small leaflet.

The chief progress made since the Third UN Conference in Athens concerns automation: a computerized gazetteer containing all official names in Israel has been produced by lineprinter, and a technical paper on this subject has been provided to the Secretariat of the Conference for circulation to delegates of the present Conference. This is the first-ever gazetteer of geographical names produced by computer which is printed by the computer in two different scripts: with both the official form in Hebrew characters and the official romanized form in Latin characters. The problem of multi-script computer-assisted gazetteers which, in spite of its importance, has not yet been dealt with by the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names, will be raised by the Israeli delegation at the Fourth Conference.

Regarding interdisciplinary and international cooperation: since it was felt that the awareness of cartographers of the work done by the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names left much to be desired, Israel proposed at the 10th International Cartographic Conference in Tokyo in 1980 that the International Cartographic Association adopt toponymy as one of the items on the agenda of its 11th Conference in Warsaw, July 1982, and there introduced a motion to increase the cooperation between the two bodies, guarding, however, against a duplicity of efforts. A similar proposal will be made to the present Conference.