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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
SIXTH CONFERENCE

Standardization of Geographical Names in Cyprus

Paper submitted by the Republic of Cyprus ***

1. Introduction - Historical Background

1 1   Cyprus lies in the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Basin   It covers an area *of* 9 251 Sq kms and is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, after Sicily and Sardinia

1.2.   According to the 1973 census, Cyprus had a population of 650 000 of which 80% were Greek Cypriots, 18% were Turkish Cypriots and 2% comprised the Armenian, Maronite and Latin communities.   The official languages of the Republic are Greek and Turkish. English is widely spoken.

1.3 Cyprus due to **its** geostrategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa has **had a** *most colorful* and turbulent history. It appears for the first time in the history of civilization in **the** 6th millennium BC during the Neolithic Period.   In the 13th century BC the Achaean Greeks **settled in** Cyprus. They introduced the Greek language which has been preserved to this day, **At the end** *of* the **4th** century BC Cyprus became part of the kingdom of Alexander the Great. During the first century BC it was made a province of the Roman Empire. This was followed by the Byzantine Period, which lasted until the 12 century AD when, during the Crusades, King Richard Coeur de Lion conquered the island; he soon handed it over to Guy de Lusignan who established a French dynasty which lasted until the 75th Century. In 1489 Cyprus was taken over by the Republic of Venice and in 1571 it was conquered by the Ottoman Empire. Cyprus came under British rule in 1878.

1.4 Cyprus was declared an independent Republic on 16th August, 1960 and in September of the Same year it became a member of the United Yations.   In 1961 it became a member *of* the Council *of* Europe, the British Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement. In 1990 it applied to pin the European Union and negotiations for accession will begin in April of 1998.

2. Geographical Names and Cartography.

2.1 The name Cyprus constitutes today the exonym of the island for the English speaking people. The name of the island, was mentioned by its present name "KYPROS", for the first time by **the** great poet Homer. The name Cyprus used in all languages derives from this original name "Kypros". We, thus, have Cyprus in Latin, Zypern in German, Cyprus in English, Chypre in French, Cipro in Italian, Kibris in Turkish, Kubrus in Arabic etc. The name 'Kypros" constitutes a universal traditional nomenclature. The etymology of this name is unknown, Perhaps it is related to **the** name of Goddess "Kypra" to whom refers the great geographer of antiquity Stravon.

2.2   Cyprus complying with the resolutions of the United Naticns Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, has kept abreast of the subject since the first conference held at Geneva in 1967, In April 1977 the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, by *decision* No. 15769, set up *an* official National Body " The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names" and in December 1988 the Council of Ministers of the Republic gave instructions for the obligatory application to all official and semi-official editions and publications, of the decisions approved and recommended by the 5th U.N. Conference to be adopted along the lines of the international system for the romanizatioh of Geographical names in the Greek alphabet standard No. ELOT 743, submitted by Greece and Cyprus.

2.3 The history of the cartography of Cyprus covers a period of more than 2,500 years. In his monumental work under the title "Geographike Hyphigesis", dating back to 160 **AD** Claudius Ptolemaeus *of* Alexandria mentions that he mapped Cyprus. This work later became known to the west as 'Ptolemy's Geographia". Ptolemy's map of Cyprus was in use until it was replaced by maps prepared by Western marine cartographers. Consequently, the geographical names of Cyprus have an old history from a cartographic, as well as, a cultural point of view. These geographical names reflect, as research students and scholars can witness, the historical and social conditions which prevailed in the long history of the island and the wealth of toponyms, *some of* which originated in antiquity and survived to present day unchanged. Evidence to prove this can be traced in all of the historical periods. The inscribed bronze table dedicated to the Temple of Goddess Athena at Acropolis of Idalium dating from the fifth century BC found in Idalium, a village southeast of Lefkosia (Nicosia) represents the first cadastral dealing in Europe and mentions at least five toponyms that have remained unaltered to this day.

2.4 From antiquity there is evidence from different sources; inscriptional, historical, geographical and others of the continuity in the use of these toponyms for many of the towns of Cyprus. The foregners, who passed from Cyprus, the historians, the geographers, the cartographers, the tourists repeat these names   And these names constitute the tradition of the universal nomenclature.

2.5 Besides the names of the towns and villages of Cyprus there are thousands of microtoponyms, which depict the different localities. The microtoponyms of Cyprus also have a historical continuity. There are documents related to land ownership testifying to this and dating from the Frankish, Venetian, and Turkish periods of the history of Cyprus. New microtoponyms can be created, to state a certain anthropogeographical entity or a certain new ownership. This microtoponyms became an essential part of land ownership and any arbitrary intervention to these microtoponyms means violation of the privilege of land ownership.

2.6 It is also worth mentioning that almost all the names of vilages shown on old maps of Cyprus, which were compiled by Italians, Dutch, French, Germans and others, are used to the present day. The conquerors of Cyprus were imposing their own system, but they were keeping the toponymic nomenclature.

2.7 The only exception is Turkey which since its invasion and occ 'pation of 37% of the territory of the Republic in 1974, is systematically attempting to change and rename in an arbitrary way the internationally accepted official toponyms that have survived through centuries. It is doing this in the area that it occupies, as well as, attempting to change some names in the free area which is under government control. This attempt, to change geographical names of Cyprus constitutes an attempt at destroying the cultural heritage of the island. Such changes and renaming amount to unauthorized interference in the affairs of an independent state and constitute an illegal action against the Republic of Cyprus, and a flagrant violation of International haw. Such changes of Geographical Names violate the resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and should not be recognized, but censured and rejected. (Resolution 16 of the third U.N. Conference).

3. Progress made In standardlzatlon.

3.1 The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names has continued its work in the parts of the island that are under Government control, and in collaboration with the Department of Lands & Surveys collected, standardized and romanized the geographical names that appear on a number of new and revised editions of maps and on the new cadastral plans as well, at various scales, implementing successfully the ELOT 743 system.

These include the following:
- Administration and Road Maps at scale 1250,000
- Touring Map at scale 1:300,000
- The Cyprus Town Plans Series (Street Name Maps) at scale 1:7,500. (Except for Ammochostos and Keryneia towns which are inaccessible due to the Turkish occupation).
- Tourist Diagrams for all the towns in the free area of the Republic at scales 1:5,000 1 : 15,000 and 50,030.
- Four street name maps for four villages at scale 1 : 5,000.
- Forest map at scale 1 : 250,000.
- Troodos & Hill Resorts Area at scale 1 : 57,700.

3.2 It is apparent that the donor countries are applying effectively the system as rapidly as possible and there is evidence that the recipient countries have positively responded in applying

it as well. It is worth noting that the Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names has, since 1987, been issuing on request free *of* charge of the Complete Gazetteer of Cyprus, Volume 1, to all official Geographical Name Authorities, Cartographic organizations, Universities and other relevant agencies.

3.3 The system has been introduced to other activities and services, namely
- The Postal Authority
- The Public Works and Communications Department
- Municipalities
- Local Authorities
- The Cyprus Tourism Organization
- The Department of Antiquities, etc.

3.4 The works that have been presented up to now to the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names by the Cyprus Republic are the following:
- 'Concise Gazetteer of Cyprus" which contains 2000 entries of the main geographical names.
- "A Complete Gazetteer *of* Cyprus" which contains 67,000 entries and constitutes the National Gazetteer *of* Cyprus.
- Administration and Road Maps of scale 1:250,000.
- The conversion system of the Greek alphabet into Roman letters which was submitted by both Greece and Cyprus and approved as ELOT 743.

4. Future Program.

4.1 The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names has scheduled the following:
- A number of requests for compilation and publication of new editions of street names, maps for large villages is pending.
- Compilation of volume II of the "**A** Complete Gazetteer of Cyprus". Further research and field work is needed to complement the whole project by adding the geographical names which do not constitute official names but exist and are part of the culture of the Cypriots because they are used by people in their every day life. However the scientific work regarding the local inquiry and field checking for verification of the material is not possible in the northern part of Cyprus due to the Turkish military occupation which renders it inaccessible to the competent authority.
- Shortly we shall be in position to supply free of charge the "**A** Complete Gazetteer of Cyprus" in digital form accompanied by a software conversion package.
- The preparation of a new and improved edition of the 'Concise Gazetteer".

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- The preparation of a booklet/guide containing directions for updating the application of the ELOT 743 Greek Alphabet System and guidelines of the naming of cartographical and other geographical features
- Compilation of a glossary under the title Local Generic terrns in Cyprus Geographical Names"
- Names of Countries and Capitals in *the Greek language*
- The preparation of a Glossary of sea and undersea terms
- The preparation of an index of all the Antiquities and Ancient Monuments with the assistance of the relevant government department

5. Participation In International meetings.

5.1 Cyprus takes part in all the conferences and sessions of the United Nations on geographical **names** and **is** a member of the following three Linguistic Divisions,
- The Romano - Hellenic Division
- The East - Central and South - East Europe Division.
- The **Asia** South - West Division (other than the Arabic Division).

6. Toponymic education and practice,

6.1 We believe that an effective Technical Assistance Committee an the Standardization of Geographical Names to organize and coordinate training courses and seminars in toponyms and in toponymic data bank systems will be very useful,

6.2 The creation *of an official* data bank system *for* geographical names on an international basis **would** be very useful for an exchange of advice and information and will constitute the means of implementation of all United Nations resolutions, by all member states.