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REPORT OF DUTCH AND GERMAN-SPEAKING DIVISION

Dutch and German-Speaking Division (DGSD)  
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Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

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### Report of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (StAGN)

The "Ständiger Ausschuss für Geographische Namen (StAGN)" is a multilateral organization for the standardization of geographical names in the German language. In the period between the 13th and the 14th Session of the UNGEGN the Committee held its 83rd, 84th and 85th meeting in Euskirchen and Frankfurt am Main under the chairmanship of Prof. Dr. H. Liedtke, Bochum. Usually some 20 specialists representing various interested institutions participate in these meetings, the majority consists of members from the Federal Republic of Germany, but there are a few representatives also from Austria and Switzerland.

The DGSD-experts that have been present in 1987 in Montreal reported about the 5th Conference of the U.N. on Geographical Names and on the 13th Session of the UNGEGN. Some measure were taken to distribute the work that had been proposed by the various U.N. resolutions.

The StAGN has concentrated some of its activities on a "Geographisches Namenbuch Amerika", a geographical gazetteer of the Americas for use in the German language area. This volume will be ready for print in fall 1989.

The Institute for Applied Geodesy in Frankfurt am Main has published in 1988 the "Digital Name Data Base Antarctica" and a series of related photomaps. The StAGN has assisted in the collection and in checking the spelling of all these names.

The StAGN has published furthermore a first edition of a synoptic list of the names of the states and its derivatives for the German language. The title of this publication is "Die Schreibweise der Staatennamen und ihrer Ableitungen sowie der Hauptstädte in den Bekanntmachungen des Deutschen Übersetzungsdienstes bei den Vereinten Nationen und der deutschsprachigen Staaten, zusammengestellt und kommentiert vom Ständigen Ausschuss für geographische Namen in Frankfurt am Main, 1. Ausgabe – Stand: September 1988. This glossary takes care of the recommendations given by the respective ministries of the four countries, in which German is the or one of the official languages, in all those cases where they deviate from the version used by the U.N. Translation Service for German.

The StAGN has studied means for improving the distribution of information about international standardization among interested map editors. It exchanges regularly also information about national names standardization among the countries involved in its activities.

Another subject discussed intensively was the question of the extension of names for smaller or larger geographical regions. These names, generally not having an official status, are more difficult to gather and standardize than names for other features like inhabited places etc. Their delimitations are often dynamic. Historical boundaries are not necessarily the same as today's touristic or economic regions. It has been recommended to publish more maps about regional names and to continue work along these lines preferably in geographical commissions.