

**UNITED NATIONS  
GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES**

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**Working Paper  
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**Item 3  
of the Provisional Agenda**

**REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS**

**Report by the Convenor of the Working Group  
on Romanization Systems**

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This report covers the period since the eighteenth session of UNGEGN that was held in Geneva, Switzerland in 1996.

#### KOREAN

In a reply to an inquiry, a response received from Seoul stated that no further progress between the two countries had been made regarding the establishment of a joint romanization system. After monitoring these efforts for almost a decade, perhaps it is time to discontinue reporting status unless events dictate otherwise.

#### THAI

In September 1997, a copy of the revised romanization system for Thai was received from the Royal Thai Survey Department. The Convenor sent copies of the new system to all members of the Working Group for review and commentary. While the consonant inventory is unchanged when compared to the system adopted by the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1967, the revised system is now at variance with the previous system regarding the vowel inventory (totaling seven differences).

#### UKRAINIAN

At the last session of UNGEGN, a new romanization system was submitted in Working Paper No. 79. The expert from Ukraine provided background information of the various government agencies that had been involved in devising this system. Extensive discussions concerning specific conversions of Cyrillic letters as well as aspects of application took place. Further inquiries and/or comments were invited. Finalization of the system in time for the Seventh Conference is anticipated.

#### HEBREW

At the last session of UNGEGN, Working Paper No. 5 was submitted outlining potential modifications to the Survey of Israel romanization system. Some of these simplifications were discussed and some reservations were also expressed. The expert from Israel invited further comments and suggestions.

#### BYELORUSSIAN

The Convenor has contacted the expert from Belarus inquiring whether a decision on adoption of an official national romanization system has been made. As of 31 October 1997 no reply had been received.