

**Twentieth Session
New York, 17 – 28 January 2000**

**Item 18
of the Provisional Agenda**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS AND THE AIMS AND FUNCTIONS OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES**

**Standardized Canadian geographical names:
A backbone for a new educational CD-ROM**

Standardized Canadian geographical names: a backbone for a new educational CD-ROM

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The importance of dissemination of authorized names by national names authorities is addressed in a number of United Nations resolutions. Use of authorized geographical names in cartographic products and in other published documents helps to promote further use of these toponyms, in preference to unofficial variant forms.

In Canada, geographical names are authorized by the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, through the jurisdictions of the provinces and territories, and are recorded and maintained on the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base managed by Natural Resources Canada. These authorized toponyms are available to potential users through the World Wide Web, digital files, or various paper gazetteer products created from the data base.

The following material introduces a particular project being undertaken by the Canadian Studies Program of the federal Department of Canadian Heritage and illustrates a significant undertaking which in the context of its presentation will help to promote standardized Canadian toponyms. An innovative CD-ROM for schools (particularly students 13-18) is being developed and will consistently use officially recognized toponyms as the fundamental backbone of the product. This product is targeted to dovetail with social studies curriculum needs across Canada. Names of places and features will be used as the starting points for students to learn about the history of naming in Canada, about the land they live on and the diversity of the people who settled and helped build the country.

150 Canadian toponyms are being selected to provide this window into Canadian history. Geographical coverage has been considered, as also has the English, French and Aboriginal language aspect of such a selection. To assist the company contracted to produce the CD-ROM an advisory group of Canadian toponymists, and a teachers' panel have been created. The toponymists are verifying the text for each of the 150 "postcards" being created and the three to five "hotspots" for each name entry. This will ensure the authority of all toponyms included, as well as the geographical/historical authenticity of the text and images presented. All 150 toponyms will also be assigned to categories relating to the timeframe of initial use and the origins of the toponym (e.g. Aboriginal, exploration, settlement, etc.). Maps, essays and quizzes will also form important aspects of the product.

This CD-ROM, forming a part of the Department's Terra Nova project, will be a high quality Canadian learning material for use in museums and libraries, as well as in schools. It will also be available to the general public. The product in English and in French will be ready by the fourth quarter of 2000 in both PC and Mac formats.

Further information can be obtained from:

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