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Report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the work of its twenty-second session

(United Nations Headquarters, 20-29 April 2004)

Summary

The twenty-second session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, convened in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2003/292 of 24 July 2003, was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 20 to 29 April 2004.

The present report describes the activities carried out by the Group of Experts at the 2004 session and presents its major findings and recommendations, with a primary focus on the importance of the work of the Group of Experts in supporting the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the essential contribution it continues to provide to Member States in the geographical information field and related cartographic areas.

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I. Terms of reference

1. In pursuance of Economic and Social Council decision 2003/292 of 24 July 2003, the Secretary-General invited the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) to convene its twenty-second session in New York from 20 to 29 April 2004.

II. Attendance

2. The session was attended by 190 participants from 63 countries, representing 21 of the 22 geographical/linguistic divisions of the Group of Experts. Fifteen observers were present. The provisional agenda for the twenty-third session of the Group of Experts is contained in the annex to the present document. The list of documents and the list of participants are issued in a separate document (GEGN/22/INF/1).

III. Officers of the session

3. The officers of the twenty-second session were:

Chairperson:

Helen Kerfoot

Vice-Chairpersons:

Brahim Atoui

Jörn Sievers

Rapporteurs:

Brian Goodchild

Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

For the names of the Chairpersons of the divisions, see the list of participants. The officers of the working groups were:

Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Convenor:

Ferjan Ormeling

Rapporteur:

Isolde Hausner

Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Convenor:

Randall Flynn

Rapporteur:

Caroline Burgess

Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

Convenor:

Naftali Kadmon

Rapporteur:

Brian Goodchild

Working Group on Romanization Systems

Convenor:

Peeter Päll

Rapporteur:

Catherine Cheetham

Working Group on Country Names

Convenor:

Leo Dillon

Rapporteur:

Charles Heyda

Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Convenor:

David Munro

Rapporteur:

Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

Convenor:

Ki-Suk Lee

Rapporteur:

Botolv Helleland

Working Group on Exonyms

Convenor:

Milan Orožen Adamic

Rapporteur:

Catherine Cheetham

Working Group on Pronunciation

Convenor:

Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig

Rapporteur:

Isolde Hausner

IV. Opening of the session

4. The Chairperson, Helen Kerfoot, opened the twenty-second session of the Group of Experts on 20 April 2004 and welcomed the experts.

5. Willem De Vries, Officer-in-Charge of the Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat, welcomed the experts to the United Nations. He referred to the outcome of the twenty-first session in Berlin and spoke of the United Nations

involvement in the field of geographic information. He also drew attention to the Division's promotion of geographical names through publications and training courses, particularly its support for recent and proposed courses.

V. Adoption of the agenda

6. The provisional agenda (GEGN/22/1) was adopted without change as follows:
 1. Opening of the session.
 2. Adoption of the agenda.
 3. Report of the Chairperson.
 4. Report of the Secretary.
 5. Reports of the divisions.
 6. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations.
 7. Summary reports of the working groups.
 8. Meeting of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy.
 9. Meeting of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.
 10. Meeting of the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology.
 11. Meeting of the Working Group on Romanization Systems.
 12. Meeting of the Working Group on Country Names.
 13. Meeting of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.
 14. Meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation.
 15. Meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms.
 16. Meeting of the Working Group on Pronunciation.
 17. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
 18. Standardization in multilingual areas.
 19. Progress made on archiving documents pertaining to the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and to the sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
 20. Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of the Group of Experts.
 21. Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.
 22. Twenty-third session of the Group of Experts.
 23. Other matters.
 24. Adoption of the report.

VI. Report of the Chairperson

7. The Chairperson provided a brief historical background to the work of the Group of Experts and spoke of an ideal world with respect to the standardization of geographical names and the considerable work that has continued since the last session of the Group of Experts (GEGN/22/7). Of particular note was the compilation of a basic manual for the national standardization of geographical names and a technical reference manual, both included in the United Nations Statistics Division's publication programme for 2004-2005.

VII. Report of the Secretary

8. The Secretary of the Group of Experts provided a summary of the major activities carried out by the UNGEGN secretariat during the period 2002-2004. The major activities were the progress made on publications, the UNGEGN web site, support for toponymic training courses and the integration of geographical names data into national and regional spatial data infrastructures. He concluded by noting the UNGEGN secretariat's increasing number of requests for information on country and major city names and the need for an UNGEGN database to assist in responding to such requests (GEGN/22/9). The Chairperson expressed the Group of Experts' support for such a programme.

VIII. Reports of the divisions

9. The Chairperson commented that over 30 papers had been submitted through the 22 UNGEGN divisions. A number of them were country reports, and should, where possible, be presented together with the divisional reports of which the country concerned is a member.

A. Dutch- and German-speaking Division

10. The Division presented working papers Nos. 6 and 8. Working paper No. 8 reported on the activities within the Division with emphasis on the promotion of minority group and indigenous geographical names, exonyms, geographical names as cultural heritage and support for training and publications. Working paper No. 6 was a similar report for the Netherlands.

11. The report for Austria, working paper No. 12, provided details of the activities of Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kartographische Ortsnamenkunde (Board on Geographical Names), technical activities in Austria, including those of official authorities and scientific and research authorities, and new publications.

B. French-speaking Division

12. The report of the French-speaking Division, working paper No. 19, reported on exonym database, web site maintenance, finance for divisional activities from l'Agence de la Francophonie and the "Introduction à la toponymie" course (Mr. Dorion, Université Laval, Canada), now developed as a web training course. It

also acknowledged the significant work of Sylvie Lejeune for the division and the Group of Experts.

C. Norden Division

13. Two papers from Sweden, working papers Nos. 26 and 27, were presented on behalf of the division. No. 26 reported on addresses, place names and legislation in Sweden, and No. 27 reported on the future of the Swedish civil parishes and their names.

14. Working paper No. 50 provided a comprehensive overview of the work on the standardization of geographical names in the Norden Division countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

15. Working paper No. 55 gave a thorough report on the Norwegian Place Names Act of 1990. It dealt with many aspects of the Act, including proposed amendments. Particular emphasis was given to the sections dealing with the protection of names and naming.

16. Working paper No. 25 reported on a book intended for a Norwegian readership on the subject of geographical names in various languages that deviate from the Norwegian forms.

D. Romano-Hellenic Division

17. The report of Turkey, working paper No. 29, gave a detailed summary of activities in standardization of geographical names in that country. The report included details of legislation, administration, standardization and the participation of Turkey in divisional activities.

18. Working paper No. 63 reported on the work of the Division to coordinate the work of its member nations with regard to standardization and to encourage countries that have not done so to participate in activities of the Division. The paper reported on plans for a multilingual glossary of geographical features.

E. China Division

19. The China Division presented working Paper No. 21, which focused on a new ordinance for the administration of geographical names, the database of geographical names, the standardization of characters and pronunciation of geographical names, standard geographical name signs, maps and gazetteers.

F. Baltic Division

20. Working papers Nos. 30 and 31 provided a comprehensive report of naming activities in the divisional countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. For each of those countries the report addressed various issues of names standardization.

G. East Central and South-East Europe Division

21. Working paper No. 32 provided information on the geographical names programmes for the countries of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. Detailed information was provided for each country regarding the various subjects on the provisional agenda of the session.

22. In a statement, the expert of the East Central and South-East Europe Division reported on activities in Serbia and Montenegro, including the creation of a digital database of geographical names and on the planned establishment of a national body on the standardization of names. The statement also commented on the unauthorized changing of geographical names.

H. Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic)

23. The representative for the Division presented working papers Nos. 53 and 70. Working paper No. 53 was the report of the Islamic Republic of Iran and referred to the new phase in Iranian geographical names since the establishment of the Iranian Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names. National activities include the establishment of working groups, the holding of a second national conference, the preparation of gazetteers and a very active transcription working group. Working paper No. 70 reported on the seventh divisional meeting held in Tehran in 2003 and attended by representatives from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. The report included a reference to the agreements and a resolution from the meeting. The meeting had also emphasized the important need for the reconstruction of the Afghanistan toponymic database.

I. United States of America/Canada Division

24. Working paper No. 56 reported continued close cooperation. Areas of activity included development of policies and procedures for the collection and application of indigenous names, the development of toponymic databases and the enhancement of web capabilities. In Canada, work had commenced on the development of a feature-based toponymic database, while, in the United States, the National Geographic Names Data Compilation Program neared completion. Also, partnerships with local and state governmental agencies were being developed to maintain and further populate the National Geographic Names Database of the United States in support of the National Map, the digital mapping programme of the United States at the United States Geological Survey.

J. United Kingdom Division

25. Working paper No. 60 provided information on the Ordnance Survey, the national mapping agency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The activities of the Ordnance Survey included the development of an electronic version of its place names gazetteer. The paper also reported on the Ordnance Survey's activity in the standardization of Welsh names in Wales and Gaelic names in the Gaelic-speaking areas of Scotland.

K. Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division

26. Working paper No. 68 reported on the tenth divisional Meeting of the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2003. Issues discussed included indigenous and minority geographical names, the regional map, the divisional gazetteer and training courses. The meeting agreed to make an updated version of the regional map and divisional gazetteer available in digital format. Also, as a result of a recommendation from the divisional meeting, the Group of Experts agreed that a new working group on the promotion of indigenous and minority group geographical names should be established to address resolution VIII/1 of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 2002.

27. Working paper No. 85 reported on activities in Indonesia, including the National Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, guidelines and training, gazetteers, data collection and maritime toponyms. Attention was also drawn to issues in respect to island names.

28. Viet Nam presented working paper No. 87, a paper on activity with regard to geographical names in Viet Nam. Attention was given to the status of geographical names, particularly in relation to the decree of January 2002, and to responsibility for geographical names. The report also referred to minority language groups in Viet Nam, progress towards a permanent committee, gazetteers and the continuing need for toponymic training.

29. The report of Thailand, working paper No. 108, reported on the work of the National Committee on Geographical Names, the Thai geographical names gazetteer and the work undertaken to provide names information to New Zealand for the divisional map and gazetteer.

30. The report of Malaysia, working paper No. 113, reported on the establishment of the National Committee for Geographical Names in 2002. The responsibilities of the Committee included developing national toponymic guidelines, a web-based National Geographical Names Database and National Gazetteer and promoting the use of official names.

31. Working paper No. 116 reported on activities in Sri Lanka, including the creation of a topographic vector database and digital gazetteer of places containing names and coordinates of places. Sri Lanka had become a member of the Asia South-East, Pacific South-West Division during the session.

L. Arabic Division

32. Working paper No. 74 reported on the attempt to collect geographical names in the United Arab Emirates and on a recommendation to establish a national geographical names authority to coordinate that activity.

33. Working paper No. 78 presented a comprehensive study of the cultural toponymy of the Sudanese Nile. Topics discussed included environmental perceptions, ethno-linguistic diversity and multicultural toponymy. The paper emphasized the importance of “folk toponymy” in the understanding of cultural values and ideologies.

34. Working paper No. 107, the report of Algeria, reported on two significant meetings held in Algeria in 2003. The first was held in March at Mostaganem University, and the second, which was held in Algiers in June, involved Henri Dorion and focused on training and the management of Algerian toponymy. Progress on the Algerian toponymic database was also reported.

35. The report of Jordan, working paper No. 111, provided details of Jordan's activities in the field of geographical names. Attention was drawn to the Jordanian Sites Index, toponymic training, the renaming project and publications.

36. The report of Morocco, working paper No. 114, reported on the creation of a new entity within the national mapping agency (L'Agence nationale de la conservation foncière, du cadastre et de la cartographie) with responsibility for the collection and standardization of geographical names and for establishing a toponymic database.

M. Africa South Division

37. Working paper No. 76 reported on the collection of names in Mozambique, the creation of a toponymic database and on a training course to be held in September 2004. It also reported that plans for the establishment of the Geographical Names Authority of Mozambique were at an advanced stage.

N. Asia East Division (other than China)

38. Working paper No. 81 reported that the division had been unable to make any progress since the twenty-first session of the Group of Experts in Berlin in 2002. The acting Chair of the division had visited both Japan and Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2004 as an expert on geographical names. It was hoped that member countries would meet in the near future to develop the activities of the division.

39. Working paper No. 88 of the Republic of Korea reported on the composition and activities of the Korean Committee on Marine Geographical Names established in 2002. Experts within the division expressed differing views on the choice and use of the name of the body of water separating the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago. The Chair encouraged bilateral or multilateral efforts to find a solution acceptable to all.

O. Celtic Division

40. The report of Ireland, working paper No. 99, gave a historical background to place names in Ireland and reported that place names in the Irish language had received legal status under the Official Languages Act of 2003. This had resulted in Irish and English language place names having equal legal status, except in traditional Irish-speaking regions, where Irish place names alone had legal status.

P. Africa East Division

41. Madagascar presented working paper No. 110, which reported on the geographical names situation in Madagascar. The report highlighted the renewal of the National Committee, the importance of names in Madagascar and the continuation of planning for ongoing work on geographical names.

Q. Africa West Division

42. In an oral statement the expert of the Africa West Division reported on the difficulties of the division. He also reported on the revival and activities of the National Names Committee of Ghana, which had been inactive for some years.

R. Latin America Division

43. Working paper No. 117 reported on the work of the Latin America Division, which had been reactivated in 2002, at the divisional and national levels. Issues included the creation of channels of communication between member countries, the systematic management of geographical names in the region, toponymic databases and web sites, and the compilation of a list of the most frequently used generic terms used in the Division.

44. Working paper No. 3, a report on progress in the standardization of geographical names in Argentina, was distributed but not presented.

S. Other divisions

45. At the conclusion of the presentation of divisional reports the Chairperson commented on some concerns with the structure and presentation of the reports. She suggested consideration of possible changes for the next meeting — to encourage the separation of items from division reports to other relevant agenda items; to change the agenda so as to split division reports from reports of sub-units of divisions; and to focus on common issues within divisions for divisional reports. Such changes and the use of the UNGEGN web site for documents could reduce presentation time and help to shorten the length of sessions.

IX. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations

International Cartographic Association

46. The liaison officer introduced working paper No. 7, which provided information on geographical names issues before the twenty-first International Cartographic Association (ICA) Conference in Durban in 2003, including the use of the special toponymic exhibition prepared for the Eighth Conference in Berlin. It also referred to the next Conference in A Coruña, Spain, in 2005 and the inclusion of a toponymy module in the Association's web course on cartography.

International Council of Onomastic Sciences

47. The liaison officer presented working papers Nos. 45 and 77 in respect to the International Council of Onomastic Sciences. Working paper No. 45 provided the details on the twenty-second International Congress of Onomastic Sciences to be held in Pisa, Italy, from 28 August to 4 September 2005. Working paper No. 77 referred to the work of the Council in regard to a working group on onomastic terminology, with the goal of publishing a catalogue of key words in the Council languages. The Convenor requested assistance from UNGEGN members in this work. The papers from the last Congress of the Council had been collected, but would not be available in published form until 2005.

Pan American Institute of Geography and History

48. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 52 regarding toponymic activity within the Pan American Institute of Geography and History since the twenty-first session of the Expert Group. A two-week training course had been held in Quito, Ecuador, in 2003, and the report provided details of the course structure. Fifteen training courses had been held since the first in June 1987 in Panama City, Panama.

Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

49. The liaison officer for the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research presented working paper No. 67 regarding UNGEGN liaison with the Committee. Forty-five countries had signed the Antarctic Treaty, but there were no internationally agreed guidelines for naming features in Antarctica. A composite gazetteer of geographical names for Antarctica had been published in 1998, and was now available on the Web and was updated quarterly. A new gazetteer was to be published in 2004.

International Hydrographic Organization

50. The liaison officer presented working paper No. 89 on the activities of the International Hydrographic Organization in respect to geographical names. The principal work at present was on undersea feature naming and the work of the Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names. Reference was also made to the organization's publication S-23, *Limits of Oceans and Seas*.

International Organization for Standardization

51. A brief verbal report made by the liaison officer for Technical Committee 211 of the organization would be elaborated on during the working group sessions. No liaison had been made recently regarding country names or romanization systems.

International Map Trade Association

52. The Chairperson invited the representative of the group to make a report to the session. The Association represents the commercial interests relating to the exchange of geospatial information, and its members include surveyors, data providers, cartographers, publishers and manufacturers, libraries and collectors. The representative acknowledged the contribution of the Group of Experts and

toponymic authorities to the geospatial information economy and his Association was keen to work with the Group of Experts.

Workshop on Toponymy, Frankfurt am Main

53. The Chairman of the Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen reported in working paper No. 35 on the programme for a workshop on toponymy held at Frankfurt am Main in September 2003. The workshop had been provided by that body for the People's Republic of China, and had resulted in a memorandum of understanding between Germany and China for joint activities in the spelling and pronunciation of geographical names.

Council of Geographic Names Authorities

54. An expert of the United States of America/Canada Division presented working paper No. 51, which provided background details on the origins of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities and its recent growth and changes. It also included details of the five objectives of the Council, recent and proposed meetings and issues and policies it was dealing with. An open invitation was given for the next meeting to be held in Jacksonville, Florida, in 2004.

X. Summary reports of the working groups

A. Exonyms

55. The Convenor of the Working Group on Exonyms presented working paper No. 33. Details of the creation of the Working Group and the second meeting, held at Prague from 24 to 26 September 2003, were provided in the report. The report also outlined a list of work objectives based on the many interesting papers presented in Prague.

B. Romanization systems

56. The Convenor of the Working Group on Romanization Systems presented working paper No. 46. The names of members of the Group were listed, and a report was given on recent progress in romanization systems with respect to a number of different languages/scripts.

C. Country names

57. The Convenor of the Working Group on Country Names presented working paper No. 65. Although the Group had not met since 2002, there had been a change of convenorship, from Sylvie Lejeune to Leo Dillon, and an abridged version of the Working Group's List of Country Names in the languages of the countries themselves had been submitted to the Group of Experts for inclusion in the forthcoming Technical Reference Manual for the Standardization of Geographical Names. Contact had also been made with the Terminology Section of the United Nations Secretariat regarding some differences in the treatment of country names, and attention had been drawn to the problem of the electronic transfer of data with

many different language scripts. Russian Cyrillic names had also been received for addition to the list.

D. Evaluation and implementation

58. The Convenor presented working paper No. 80, which provided a report of the recent meeting of the Working Group in Seoul, from 2 to 4 December 2003. The report included a list of the agenda items discussed and the names of six participants and two observers at the meeting.

E. Toponymic data files and gazetteers

59. The Convenor of the Working Group presented working paper No. 92. Membership of the group was listed and the terms of reference and work plan. Progress on the various points in the work plan was then listed in detail, and reference was made to the future work required of the group.

F. Training courses in toponymy

60. The Convenor presented working paper No. 109, which provided a summary report of the recent activities of the group. The report referred to the organization of training courses and their financing, issues regarding the determination of the best model for the delivery of training and the importance of including the preservation of cultural heritage in training. Reference was also made to the Working Group's web site.

G. Publicity and funding

61. The Convenor gave a verbal report for the Working Group, including a brief history, aims and achievements.

H. Pronunciation

62. The Convenor gave a verbal report for this new Working Group, which had been established at the Eighth Conference in 2002. There had been little progress so far, but a short meeting had been held in Berlin and the aims, objectives and procedures were to be determined at an informal meeting later in the session.

I. Toponymic terminology

63. In the Convenor's temporary absence, the Chairperson reported that a lot of effort had gone into the publication of the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names*, which had been published by the United Nations in a six-language format in 2002 and the aim was now to add to and amend it.

XI. Meeting of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

64. In working paper No. 5 the Convenor emphasized the need for toponymic training courses to gain qualified personnel. He reported on international training courses or workshops held since the twenty-first session of the Group of Experts in Khartoum, Quito and Algiers. An expert from the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division also commented on Indonesia's programme on geographical names and its committee, which worked at the national, provincial and district levels in the field of names standardization (names collection and training).

65. The Convenor acknowledged the long series of toponymy courses organized by the expert from the Pan American Institute of Geography and History and the planned web site of the Institute with all material for training courses. The web site should be available in about a year's time. The expert from the Arabic Division gave information about the workshop on place names in Algeria, which had been convened from 2 to 3 June 2003 in Algiers. It had been organized by the National Council on Geographical Information and the Permanent Committee on Toponymy using the material of Henri Dorion and his course on the Web. A second meeting was planned for 2004 and would be focused on the training of technicians and the collection of toponyms.

66. The fifteenth course of the Institute in applied toponymy had been held in Quito from 23 June to 4 July 2003, the training team being directed by Mr. Payne. A sixteenth course, to be given by the Institute, was scheduled to be held in Santo Domingo during the first two weeks of August 2004. Other training courses were planned for Maputo from 13 to 23 September 2004 at the National Directorate of Geography and Cadastral Survey, organized for southern Africa, and at Bathurst, Australia, Charles Sturt University, from 12 to 24 October 2004, organized by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy and the New South Wales Geographical Names Board (local organizer: Flavia Hodges (fhodge@hmn.unq.edu.au)).

67. Training materials were described. Two manuals had been compiled and would be published by the United Nations in response to Conference resolution VIII/15 in 2004/05: a basic manual on national standardization of geographical names, and a technical reference manual on romanization, toponymic data transfer standards and formats, and country names. The Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie (Frankfurt am Main) would publish the lectures given at the toponymy training course in 2002.

68. The International Cartographic Association had produced a toponymy module as part of a cartography webcourse. It had been created by E. Földi, A. Guszlev and L. Zentai, and could be accessed at <http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet>. The Convenor demonstrated the principles of the Association's webcourse and the concept behind it. He explained the structure, the various modules for self-study, the exercises and the documents provided in this webcourse. The UNGEGN Chairperson regarded this as a step forward towards web training. The course was in English and might be available in French in the future. Other training materials were listed on the toponymy courses web site at <http://toponymycourses.geog.uu.nl/>.

69. In working paper No. 36, the expert from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division reported on the training course on toponymy, which had been given in Enschede, Frankfurt am Main, and in Berlin from 11 August to 6 September 2002 in

conjunction with the Eighth Conference. It had been given by the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation in Enschede and the Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie in Frankfurt am Main. It had been attended by 20 participants from 17 countries. The materials would be available as a printed publication (at a cost) and might later be available on the Internet.

70. In working paper No. 57 Canada noted that the Commission de toponymie du Québec offered an introductory toponymy course in French on the Web (<http://www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca>, Outils section). It had several objectives: the presentation of an introduction to basic toponymic knowledge; the demonstration of the double function of geographical names; the location and cultural evidence; and the problems of toponymic management at the municipal, local and international levels. The matter was treated in 14 modules and links of interest were attached. The Convenor stated that there were now two courses on toponymy available on the Web and emphasized that the webcourses especially gave developing countries access to toponymic material.

71. Working paper No. 59 was dedicated to the book *Toponymy — The lore, laws and language of geographical names* by Naftali Kadmon and its Japanese edition. The translation had been undertaken by Mr. Nobuo Nagai, the Director of Research of the Japan Map Center of Tokyo. The author congratulated the Japan Map Center on the quality and speed with which the volume had been produced.

XII. Meeting of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

72. A representative of the Asia East Division (other than China) presented working papers Nos. 86 and 90 detailing toponymic work in the Republic of Korea. The papers described toponymic data collection, processing and maintenance carried out by the National Geographic Information Institute and its Central Geographical Names Committee. Access to the data in Korean was available online.

73. Working paper No. 9 of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division reported on the production of the Hydrological Atlas of Austria and described its content and its availability as a printed publication combined with an accompanying GIS-based CD-ROM. Working paper No. 10, presented by the same Division, detailed a Diachronic Index of Settlement Names in the Banat, 1890-1992, and four accompanying maps that had been edited by the Austrian Institute of East and South-East European Studies. In addition, working paper No. 11 described a names data file of settlement names in the Vistula catchment area from the twelfth century to the present that was being compiled in Austria. The data would soon be available on the Internet.

74. A representative from the United States of America/Canada Division presented working paper No. 13 covering the ongoing development of the Canadian Geographical Names Service, a free web-based service through which spatially enabled Canadian toponymic data was to be delivered. The future incorporation of the spatial representation of features by geometry rather than single point was discussed.

75. Working paper No. 115 was accompanied by a presentation given by the Cartographic Section of the United Nations Secretariat, on the United Nations

Geographic Database. The types of cartographic support provided to the United Nations by the Section were summarized and the various components of the Geographic Database Project were outlined. Problems were being encountered relating to geographical names information, including the lack of detailed current inventories of local official geographical names and continued difficulties in the application of diacritical marks in digital applications. It was agreed that collaboration with UNGEGN experts was of paramount importance and they were encouraged to provide digital names information to the Section.

76. The content of a three-part Polish toponymic guide produced by the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography was outlined by the representative of the East Central and South-East Europe Division in working paper No. 17. It was also reported that a digital database of Polish toponyms was in progress.

77. The Baltic Division presented working paper No. 20 on the completion of the first Concise Gazetteer of Latvia in 2004. One of the Gazetteer's compilers, Zinta Goba, a UNGEGN member, had recently passed away and condolences were conveyed to the Latvian experts.

78. The official Swedish place-names database was described in working paper No. 28. The database, when completed, would be accessible via the Internet, with an accompanying version of the toponymic guidelines of Sweden. In discussing suggested fields to be included in such a database, the session commented on the benefits and pitfalls of adding etymological information.

79. The Dutch- and German-speaking Division reported in working paper No. 37 on GN250, the digital Gazetteer of the Federal Republic of Germany, and its abbreviated version GN1000. The representative also presented working paper No. 38 on the publication of the third edition of the *Dictionary of Geographical Regions of Germany*, and working paper No. 39 concerning a four-sheet map project showing geographical names in the German coastal area.

80. In conjunction with working paper No. 40, a detailed presentation was given by a representative of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division on the European Geographical Names GIS Network Project (EuroGeoNames). This envisaged the establishment of a distributed Europe-wide geographical names network, in which each European country would provide access to its own domestic names data in its national official languages. The representative outlined the contents of an initial survey that needed to be carried out.

81. The Romano-Hellenic Division reported in working paper No. 64 that Division members had provided information for the compilation of a multilingual glossary of geographical feature terms in nine languages of the Division, with an explanation of each term in English.

82. The official Central Place Name Register of Norway was described by the Norden Division in working paper No. 69. The expert outlined the background to the database's creation and included some of the technical specifications, including special concern for geographical names in minority languages. This newly created database could be used in a number of applications and on the Internet. Currently, names were being captured from Norwegian hydrographic charts for incorporation into the database.

83. Working paper No. 82 presented by the Asia East Division (other than China) described developments by the Geographical Survey Institute of Japan in the digital storage and presentation of its names data. Information in the newly completed geographical database could be accessed via the Topographic Map Browsing System and the Digital Japan Web System, both of which provided online geographical names search facilities. The data could also be publicly downloaded into a GIS.

84. In working paper No. 84, the East Central and South-East Europe Division detailed the content of two toponymic web sites in Hungary, one offering limited access, in Hungarian, to the Gazetteer-Database of Hungary, and the other providing information on names and data of localities of Hungary.

85. The Romano-Hellenic Division, in working paper No. 95, detailed contents of a new Concise Gazetteer being compiled by the National Geographical Institute of Spain. An outline of the various database fields was given, and the policies for the treatment of the names data were specified. Certain points concerning the status of Spain's different languages, its administrative structure and the reversal of generic terms in the database were elucidated.

86. Africa South Division presented working paper No. 103 on the creation of a new South African Geographical Names Database for the South African Geographical Names Council. A visual presentation portrayed the procedures being followed, the levels of consultation, and the progress made thus far. The database was available online.

87. Working paper No. 119, presented by the Latin America Division, described the structure of the National Register of Geographical Names in Mexico. The paper reported that national geographical names were in the process of being collected and standardized for input into the Register, and highlighted the key areas of information to be included.

88. United States of America/Canada Division summarized activities in the United States with regard to digital names information, specifically the United States domestic geographical names database, which was accessible through the Geographic Names Information System, and the National Map project, one layer of which consisted of geographical names. The importance of providing a single source (or alternatively a warehouse) for official national geographical names was emphasized.

89. Working paper No. 71 from Cuba was distributed, but not presented. It provided information on achievements in developing Cuban digital toponymic data.

90. The Convenor concluded that the demand for gazetteers and digital names data would continue to grow and that this working group should be prepared to provide leadership in the development of standards for toponymic data and to offer technical assistance and advice.

XIII. Meeting of the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

91. The Convenor noted the rejuvenation of the Group of Experts since its establishment. The text of the multilingual *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names*, approved at the twentieth session, had

been compiled and edited for printing in the six United Nations languages in 2002. The text was now also available in a number of other languages.

92. The Convenor spoke of Conference resolution VIII/3, which called for a review and updating of the Glossary as necessary, and reported that several new terms had been proposed for addition, including “trans-boundary toponym”. The redefinition of “exonym” and “endonym” was under consideration and the term “ethnonym”, which had been previously discussed, would be reconsidered. He also noted that at the International Council of Onomastic Sciences conference in 2002 two new terms, “oikonym” and “anoikonym”, had been proposed.

93. The Convenor indicated that the working group would also consider possible definitions for “univocity”, “geonym” and “corrupted exonym”. A request was also made for consideration whether the terms “standard name”, “standardized name”, “approved name”, “authorized name” and “official name” were, in fact, synonyms.

XIV. Meeting of the Working Group on Romanization Systems

94. The Convenor recalled a number of resolutions stating the aims of the working group. He noted that input of countries using non-Roman scripts was vital to progress. Such countries submitted romanization systems to the Group of Experts and the Working Group consulted on them, considering such factors as scientific soundness and the system’s reversibility. After consultation, the system was presented to a United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and, following resolution, the system became the United Nations standard. The Group then monitored the system’s level of implementation in both donor and receiver communities.

95. The Convenor presented working paper No. 48 detailing a number of updates to the report on the status of United Nations romanization systems since 2002. The full report was available online at the Working Group’s web site: <http://www.eki.ee/wgrs/>.

96. Experts from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea stated their willingness to formulate a jointly agreed romanization system for Korean. The Convenor expressed encouragement and looked forward to further reports.

97. Working paper No. 73, of the Arabic Division, detailed proposals for modifications and additions to the approved United Nations romanization system for Arabic. These modifications would be included in the proposal to be presented to the League of Arab States for approval. The importance of maintaining various distinctions in the romanized forms was explained and it was hoped that notes for clarification would increase the system’s user-friendliness. Lebanon had produced a gazetteer and a map, at 1:200,000 scale, based on the proposed romanization system.

98. Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) reported on the transcription procedure for the geographical names of the Islamic Republic of Iran in working paper No. 54. The session was informed of a new transcription working group within the Iranian Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names. This group’s work on the transliteration of Persian-script geographical names would be presented to the Group of Experts in due course. The Group of Experts looked forward to receiving the handbooks.

99. The United Kingdom Division presented working paper No. 23 on usage of the existing United Nations-approved romanization system for Arabic and commented on proposed changes to be submitted to the League of Arab States, one of which was seen to be particularly significant. The paper discussed the current system's stability and appropriateness. It was noted that, though not all Arabic-speaking countries had adopted the system, it had been used widely by the receiver community.

100. The Convenor outlined the upcoming tasks of the Working Group. Modifications to the systems for Arabic and Khmer were likely to be forthcoming. Further work would be undertaken to verify the system in use for Amharic in Ethiopia; making contact with Armenia was also anticipated. The working group would also be considering donor systems for Georgian, Korean and Ukrainian. National systems had been seen to be in use for Belarusian, Dzongkha and Maldivian and it was hoped that these would be submitted to the working group. The Convenor hoped to clarify the systems for Sinhalese and Tamil.

XV. Meeting of the Working Group on Country Names

101. The Convenor stated that the main goal of the Working Group was the maintenance and updating of the document on country names, which had been last submitted at the Eighth Conference in Berlin (E/CONF.94/CRP.11).

102. Working paper No. 16 from the East Central and South-East Europe Division described a Polish publication in 2003 that gave information about the names in Polish of independent countries and dependent territories of the world. The Convenor stressed that the publication was for informational purposes only.

103. Working paper No. 41 from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division described the eighth edition of a list of country names in German, containing the country and territory names in use by the foreign offices of Austria, Germany and Switzerland as of February 2004. The expert stated that differences remained between the three countries in the use of some country names.

104. Working paper No. 62 from the French-speaking Division outlined the various organizations in France involved in processing country names, and the two recent publications of the National Council of Toponymy dealing with the names of countries and capitals of the world and with "secondary entities".

105. A representative from the Terminology and Reference Section of the United Nations Secretariat stated that the names presented in the United Nations Terminology Bulletin had been provided directly by the Member States. He mentioned that the Terminology Bulletin was now available on the United Nations web site and that Revision 2 of the Bulletin should be available soon. The Convenor mentioned that the document on country names prepared by the working group contained additional information to the United Nations Terminology Bulletin in terms of names in the language(s) of the countries, as well as names used by various national authorities.

106. Working paper No. 66, presented by the Convenor, described two documents that the United States Department of State maintained on its web site: Independent States in the World, and Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty. The Convenor stated that United States Government standard codes (FIPS), rather than ISO codes, were used in both documents.

107. Working paper No. 98 presented by the Romano-Hellenic Division described the list of names of countries and capitals of the world as used by Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Royal Spanish Academy.

108. The Convenor urged UNGEGN members to look at the names of their own country in the document submitted in Berlin in 2002 and to verify that the included information was accurate.

XVI. Meeting of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding

109. The Convenor reported in working paper No. 61 on the activities of the Working Group. He emphasized the importance of the web site and the UNGEGN Bulletin for communication. He noted that the UNGEGN brochure had been especially successful and that it was now available in the six United Nations languages, as well as in Greek and Italian. He reported that funding was available from the United Nations for the support of training courses and the publication of two manuals in 2004/05. It was suggested that an information leaflet be prepared particularly targeted at the GIS and cartographic community with a view to heightening awareness of geographical names and the activities of the Group of Experts.

110. Working paper No. 94, presented by the Romano-Hellenic Division, gave a list of geographical organizations in Spain to which UNGEGN brochures had been sent. The Convenor encouraged experts to communicate with regional and national organizations, such as geographical and place name societies, to promote awareness of geographical names issues.

111. Africa South Division reported in working paper No. 102 on the use of incorrect names in the media and on their approaches to rectifying that situation. In a wider context, it was suggested that where experts became aware of place name errors in media and in usage by private institutions, they might, if possible, communicate corrections.

XVII. Meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

112. Working paper No. 121 was a special paper presented in plenary session by the former UNGEGN Chair, Peter Raper. The paper dealt with the challenges faced in the standardization of geographical names in sub-Saharan Africa. The paper was a comprehensive summary of the steps taken in a number of African countries in implementing the resolutions of the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and made suggestions as to how further progress might be achieved. General discussion ensued on how progress might take place in sub-Saharan African nations with geographical names standardization, with comments from a number of divisions and the secretariat. All of the UNGEGN African divisions arranged to meet during the session to consider those issues.

113. The Convenor noted the re-establishment of the Working Group at the twentieth UNGEGN session and reported that it had met in Seoul in 2003.

114. Africa South Division presented working paper No. 100, which reported on the establishment of provincial geographical names committees in all nine provinces of South Africa. The division also presented working paper No. 101 on capacity-building for provincial geographical names, focusing on the recently established geographical names database system in South Africa and the facilitation of an online application by public and other institutions. A new edition of the toponymic guidelines for South Africa was currently under consideration. It was noted that decisions on names were taken at the national level after recommendations at the provincial and local levels.

115. The Chairperson introduced working paper No. 91 dealing with evaluation of the Eighth Conference in Berlin, 2002. The paper provided views and opinions from 27 participants who had responded to a questionnaire. The main topics covered were the value of the Conference, what could be improved, what the participants considered as the main goals of the Conferences, and what actions ought to be undertaken by the Group of Experts before the next Conference. The comments were considered to be useful for planning, and a similar survey should be undertaken in 2007.

116. On the question of Conference venues, support was expressed for the possibility of holding conferences in United Nations facilities outside North America and Europe.

117. In a discussion on the creation and structure of UNGEGN geographical/linguistic divisions, it was indicated by the secretariat that divisions were created according to need, and that countries were free to participate in more than one division, as reflected in the rules of procedure.

118. The Convenor presented working paper No. 79 on the meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation in Seoul from 2 to 4 December 2003, during which both general and operational objectives were discussed. General objectives applied to the implementation of resolutions and proposed actions to increase the effectiveness of the Conferences. Operational objectives applied to such items as participation, documentation, location, timing, length, and organization of Conferences and sessions, the structure and functioning of the Group of Experts and its divisions and working groups, support and funding for developing countries and communications. Responsibility for different tasks was assigned.

119. It was stressed that the UNGEGN Information Bulletin was an effective means of communication, and divisions and experts were encouraged to contribute to the forthcoming issues. The Bulletin was also considered to be a good way of publicizing and promoting the work of the Group.

120. Working paper No. 58 introduced by the Chairperson, was a comprehensive list with contact information for national names authorities and other agencies as of March 2004. As this involved vital contact material, divisions and experts were asked to update and complete the information in the list.

121. The Chairperson also presented working paper No. 43, which was an initial list of national names authorities. A world map was presented, showing which countries had national names authorities. Divisions and experts were also encouraged to provide additional information, particularly so that information for countries shown as “status unknown” could be updated.

122. It was suggested that the invitation and agenda of future UNGEGN meetings and Conferences should include 1 to 2 pages of information on the UNGEGN objectives, so that the Permanent Missions and agencies concerned would take more interest in forwarding the documents to experts. The Convenor anticipated that a more comprehensive report would be presented to the next UNGEGN session.

XVIII. Meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms

123. The Convenor presented working paper No. 34, the Working Group report. The group had met in Prague in September 2003 and, as a recently established working group, consideration had been given to the group's objectives. They had been determined as: clarifying definitions of relevant terminology; providing guidance on production of lists of exonyms (as noted in United Nations resolutions); developing advice on use of exonyms; and testing the efficacy of existing United Nations resolutions on exonyms. A book on exonyms was also planned and it was hoped that Working Group members' contributions would be collected towards the end of 2004. The Convenor also introduced the Group's new Co-Convenor, Peter Jordan from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division. Pages from the Working Group's web site, www.zrc-sazu.si/wge, were displayed; the site included papers that had been presented at the Working Group meeting in Prague.

124. An expert from the United Kingdom Division summarized the content of three papers from the Prague meeting, including consideration of the overlap in the current United Nations glossary between the definitions of "endonym" and "exonym". Since that meeting, the proposed definitions had been further revised. The expert from the East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic) noted that, until agreement was reached within the Working Group on Exonyms and with the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology, the existing definitions in the glossary would stand.

125. An expert from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division summarized his account of the criteria for the use of exonyms, which he had presented in Prague, and underlined the political sensitivity of exonym use. It was noted that the working group's tasks included the identification of categories of exonyms. Further discussion of policy for the presentation of exonyms and endonyms in cartographic products and texts would be undertaken.

126. Working paper No. 118 from the Romano-Hellenic Division listed the main Italian exonyms of features in Europe. It was noted that some Italian exonyms had fallen out of use through the natural passage of time, but others had endured. The Convenor noted that the listing was an example of the work suggested by the working group's second objective.

127. An expert from the East Central and South-East Europe Division reported on Hungarian-language exonyms in working paper No. 83. It was noted that many Hungarian exonyms existed because of the presence of ethnic Hungarians in neighbouring countries, and those names, used by Hungarians, were unofficial name variants in those countries. Under the current definitions they could also be endonyms. The proposed new definitions, would, in addition, ensure elimination of the problem of overlap. Recent legislation in those countries on the use of minority place names might remove these names from exonym status. An important question in assessing a name as an exonym or endonym was whether the State had a role in

determining that status. The planned new definitions would allow for the State to play a role, but were not dependent on that.

128. Working paper No. 72, describing the treatment of exonyms in Cuba, was distributed, but not presented.

XIX. Meeting of the Working Group on Pronunciation

129. The Convenor noted that the Working Group had been created at the eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin, in accordance with resolution VIII/11, and stressed that pronunciation was a complex issue, at both the international and the national levels.

130. Working paper No. 1, from the East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic), addressed the need for pronunciation guides for geographical names to be accepted by the Group of Experts and confirmed by the Conference. The expert pointed out that transliteration in general does not solve the problem of pronouncing foreign names. He proposed that countries should prepare national pronunciation guides, starting with phase 1 (for English). The discussion that followed contributed a further aspect: the availability of pronunciation guides for geographical names in spoken form.

131. Working paper No. 2, from the East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic), presented the pronunciation guide for Hebrew geographical names with a specification of its problems. The guide was designed to enable foreign users both to read names on Hebrew maps and to pronounce Hebrew names in their written form.

132. Working paper No. 22, from the China Division, pointed out the problems of characters and the pronunciation of Chinese geographical names. In 2000, a research project on the use of characters and pronunciation had been started in China. The goal was the standardization of characters (in mandarin) and the pronunciation of the names of all administrative districts. In the following discussion it was stated that Chinese had a non-phonological script, which presented a special problem for romanization and in particular for pronunciation guides. Pinyin solved that problem.

XX. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors

133. The Chairperson charted the background of the toponymic guidelines from the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Athens in 1977 and the role of Josef Breu, a former Chairperson of UNGEGN, in their development, starting with the first set of toponymic guidelines for Austria. The Chairperson also noted the important role of the former Chairperson, Peter Raper, in encouraging and coordinating the preparation of guidelines and stressed their importance for international use. More than 35 countries had now presented guidelines (some in several editions) and at least six countries had guidelines on the Web. At the Chairperson's request an expert of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, Isolde Hausner, agreed to take over the task of coordinating and re-evaluating the content of guidelines.

134. Working paper No. 49, from the Norden Division, presented the fourth revised edition for 2004 of the toponymic guidelines of Finland, which gave comprehensive

information on the status of the geographical names of that country, including Finnish, Swedish and Saami names. The paper included the recommendations of the Finnish and Swedish Language Boards regarding the use of geographical names in multilingual areas in documents of different languages. Updated information included material on terminology and administrative divisions.

135. Working paper No. 112, from the Romano-Hellenic Division, presented the toponymic guidelines for map and other editors (third draft edition) of Italy. The document gave comprehensive information on the position of minority languages and regional dialects in the country and on legislation enacted for their protection. The working paper also gave details of names authorities and on names standardization.

136. Working paper No. 18, from the East Central and South-East Europe Division, gave information on the administrative divisions of Poland as of 1 January 2004.

137. Working paper No. 47, from the Baltic Division, presented an English translation of the Place Names Act of Estonia, which had been passed in 2003, replacing the Act of 1996. The Act specified the official use of place names, the role of the National Place Names Register in the collection of names, and the statutory right of the Place Names Board to approve official geographical names.

138. Working paper No. 105, from the Africa South Division, gave information on a school competition to suggest names in official languages other than Afrikaans or English for various features on Marion Island. The naming process was under the jurisdiction of South African Geographical Names Council.

XXI. Standardization in multilingual areas

139. In her introductory remarks, the Chairperson noted the multitude of countries in which two or more languages were used, sometimes written in more than one script. She commented on the various issues pertaining to the standardization of geographical names in those multilingual areas.

140. The United States of America/Canada Division presented working paper No. 15, which was a comprehensive report on activities in Canada since 1898 at the national and provincial levels to promote indigenous geographical names. Activities included the collection and orthography of indigenous names, symposia, publications and web sites providing information on the names.

141. Working paper No. 24, from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, reported on the status of minority languages in Austria and the treatment of geographical names in minority language areas.

142. Working paper No. 44, from the Norden Division, reported on Kven (Finnish) minority names in Norway. The treatment of such names in official contexts was regulated by the Norwegian Place Names Act.

143. Working paper No. 104, from the Africa South Division, reported on progress in the standardization of names of local authorities in South Africa and the inclusion of such names in the database of the South African Geographical Names Council.

XXII. Progress made in archiving documents pertaining to the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and to the sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

144. The Chairperson reported on the concerns of experts about papers from Conferences and UNGEGN sessions since 1967, in particular on the lack of availability of older technical documents, despite a thorough search in the collections of the United Nations in New York. The UNGEGN secretariat reported that all Conference and UNGEGN reports were available in paper form from the secretariat and that most technical papers from the Eighth Conference were available on the UNGEGN web site, which was now the main archive for documents. The Chairperson noted that gaps in the United Nations archive might be filled from archives held by individual countries, for example, France, Austria, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and added that the possibility of scanning selected older documents might be considered.

XXIII. Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of the Group of Experts

145. Working paper No. 42, presented by the Dutch- and German-Speaking Division, was a status report on the promotion of minority group names in the Federal Republic of Germany. The Framework Convention of the European Council on the Protection of National Minorities had entered into law in Germany in 1998, and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 1999.

146. Working paper No. 93, from the Asia South-East and Pacific South West Division, referred to implementation of Conference resolution VIII/1 on the promotion of indigenous and minority group names. The paper focused on the means by which a reporting method might be developed to promote this work, including suggestions of possible items for inclusion in a database. A report was made of the first meeting of the new Working Group for the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group names. Voluntary input would be requested from interested countries, with an interim report anticipated by 2006 and a full report to the 2007 Conference.

147. An expert from the United States of America/Canada Division noted that the United States was revising its policy on indigenous names and would soon republish the pamphlet on this policy. Field collection of such names was encouraged but financial resources for this purpose were limited.

148. Working paper No. 14 from the United States of America/Canada Division, reported on commemorative naming practices in Canada with respect to resolution VIII/2 of the Eighth Conference. Particular attention was given to the length of time between the death of a person and when their name could be used, subject to the naming guidelines of individual jurisdictions. The United States expert reported that the policy in his country was a five-year waiting period, with no exceptions; that policy applied only to natural features. Other experts also commented on the acceptance or non-acceptance of using the name of living persons for naming physical and constructed (man-made) features in their countries.

149. Conference resolution VIII/3 was being implemented through the continuing activities of the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology. With regard to resolution VIII/4 and the Working Group on Exonyms, the Group was already active and the Convenor announced the next proposed meeting in Slovenia in 2005.

150. With regard to resolution VIII/5, which had encouraged joint meetings of divisions and working groups, the expert from the Dutch- and German-speaking Division advised experts of a 2005 meeting and the symposium on minority group names to be held in the Netherlands in April 2005 in conjunction with a meeting of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.

151. The Convenor of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers noted progress with respect to Conference resolutions VIII/6, 7 and 8, on the integration of geographical names data into national and regional spatial data infrastructures, toponymic data exchange formats and assistance to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group, with attention drawn to the EuroGeoNames project and liaison with the United Nations Working Group.

152. Conference resolution VIII/9 had referred to geographical names as cultural heritage, and various papers had been presented at the session on this matter. The Norden Division expert urged delegates to promote such consideration in their individual countries. The Chairperson requested the expert, Mr. Botolv Helleland, to review such activity and to produce a brief summary of work on the status of the resolution for the next session of the Group of Experts.

153. Conference resolution VIII/10 had encouraged the expansion of toponymic data-collection procedures in countries, and it was evident from the impressive number of papers on toponymic data files at the session that this matter was being addressed.

154. Conference resolution VIII/11 had established a Working Group on Pronunciation; the Working Group had now met and some progress made in planning a strategy to promote the issue.

155. Conference resolution VIII/12 had referred to the standardization of country names, and the Working Group Convenor reported on the activities of the Working Group in pursuance of the resolution.

156. Conference resolutions VIII/13 and VIII/14 had referred to the romanization of Thai and Serbian Cyrillic, and the implementation of both resolutions had been taken into consideration by the Working Group on Romanization.

157. Conference resolution VIII/15 had addressed support by the United Nations Statistics Division for training and publications. It was confirmed that the Secretariat had put in place such a programme.

158. In working paper No. 4, the Chairperson reported on progress on the preparation of the new UNGEGN manuals on the standardization of geographical names. Some minor corrections were to be made, based on work at the current session, illustrations and acknowledgements were to be confirmed and indexing undertaken. Issues with the character sets might pose a challenge to the publication of the Technical Reference manual.

159. The Chairperson commented that good overall progress had been made on implementing resolutions from the Eighth Conference, and encouraged divisions to include the various issues on divisional meeting agendas.

160. Working paper No. 75, presented by the Norden Division, referred to a proposed Swedish publication by Hans Ringstam on the work of the Group of Experts. That comprehensive book had eight chapters, and would include a Swedish language version of the Glossary of Terminology.

161. Working paper No. 106, presented by the Arabic Division, reported on the Algerian geographical names database. The first phase of the database captured names from cartographic sources in Roman characters, and the second phase would include standardization in Arabic. The project was at the initial stages at present, and would require considerable work.

162. The expert from the Africa West Division reported on the informal meeting of African experts present at the current UNGEGN session. Four of the divisions had met and agreed to work with the Group of Experts in seeking support and assistance. A strategy was outlined to foster the standardization of geographical names in Africa, including liaison with African bodies such as the Committee on Development Information of ECA. At the informal meeting, a task team, led by Ridwan Brimah of Ghana, West Africa, was mandated to initiate the process with a focus on working together to establish national committees and to revive the various divisions. The Liaison Officer of the International Cartographic Association reported that the Association had a working group entitled "Mapping Africa for Africa" under the leadership of the Kenyan Surveyor General, and that group could be a useful contact.

XXIV. Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

163. The Chairperson reported on document GEGN/22/10, the provisional agenda for the Conference, which would be held in the second half of 2007.

XXV. Twenty-third session of the Group of Experts

164. Document GEGN/22/12 provided a provisional agenda for the twenty-third session of the Group of Experts. It was accepted with minor changes.

165. The Chairperson reported the results of the survey taken during the session on the length of the next session and on the distribution and presentation of division/country reports. A six-day meeting was favoured by the majority and was proposed for consideration. Regarding the distribution and presentation of the reports, a small majority favoured distribution only of division/country reports. The Chairperson also commented on issues concerning the timely receipt of reports, presentation of summaries, and the optimal use of the UNGEGN web site for dissemination of papers before the session. Those questions would be reviewed further with the Secretariat prior to the next Session.

166. From the Dutch- and German-speaking Division, an expert from Austria proposed that the next session should be held in the United Nations facilities in

Vienna between March and May 2006. The proposal was endorsed by the experts. Potentially, the venue would allow greater participation from European, African and Asian countries. An associated training course might also be possible, along with a demonstration of progress on the proposed project to network the geographical names databases of Europe.

XXVI. Other matters

167. Working paper No. 96, presented by the Romano-Hellenic Division, reported on changes made to the web site of the Spanish National Authority.

XXVII. Adoption of the report

168. The Group of Experts adopted the report as amended during its reading.

XXVIII. Expression of thanks

169. Thanks were expressed to the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons, Rapporteurs, Division Chairs and Working Group Convenors and Rapporteurs, the secretariat and conference services staff for their contribution to the session.

Annex**Provisional agenda for the twenty-third session of the
United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

1. Opening of the session.
 2. Adoption of the agenda.
 3. Report of the Chairperson.
 4. Report of the UNGEGN secretariat.
 5. Reports of the divisions.
 6. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations.
 7. Activities relating to the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy.
 8. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers.
 9. Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology.
 10. Activities relating to the Working Group on Romanization Systems.
 11. Activities relating to the Working Group on Country Names.
 12. Activities relating to the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.
 13. Activities relating to the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation.
 14. Activities relating to the Working Group on Exonyms.
 15. Activities relating to the Working Group on Pronunciation.
 16. Activities relating to the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Names.
 17. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
 18. Other toponymic issues.
 19. Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of the Group of Experts.
 20. Preparation for the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.
 21. Provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
 22. Adoption of the report.
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