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Benefits of Standardizing Geographical Names to Be Discussed as Expert Group Opens Twenty-eighth Session at Headquarters

PRESS RELEASE

The meeting, which is organized by the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, brings together experts to discuss ways and means in which the standardization of geographical names is being advanced for the benefit of citizens, Governments and non-governmental organizations alike.

Being one of the seven standing expert bodies of the Economic and Social Council, with over 400 members from more than 100 countries, the Group of Experts furthers the essential work of geographical names standardization begun more than 50 years ago in 1960 when the first Expert Group met in New York with a view to promoting more effective communication worldwide.

Between the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names, which is held at five-year intervals, the Group holds its own sessions and carries out its work through the activities of 24 linguistic/geographical Divisions and 12 Working Groups, as well as special task teams.


By bringing together names experts from Member States and by encouraging the collection, storage and authorization of geographical names, the Group is able to facilitate the development and dissemination of principles, policies and methods suitable for achieving consistency in the use of geographical names.

The availability of accurate, clear and unambiguous nationally approved geographical names is essential to national and international communication, particularly in the modern digital world, where geographical names now constitute a core element of geo-location through geo-referenced data sets. Geographical names are fundamental to almost every aspect of the life of a nation, from the creation of national data infrastructures in support of planning, economic development and communications systems, through natural hazard prediction and coordination of emergency services to the building up of a national coherence and unity, allowing linguistic minorities a "spatial voice".

The twenty-eighth Session, in addition to the presentation of almost 80 working papers on technical and cultural toponymic issues, will discuss international standards, will assist in the process of promoting an awareness of geographical names issues and the work of the Group, particularly in the countries of Africa.

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 **Daily Noon Briefing**



13 NOVEMBER 2014

Before departing Myanmar today, the Secretary-General met with President U Thein Sein and commended him on his leadership in advancing the peace process between the Government and ethnic armed groups. He also underlined that all stakeholders need to take a "leap of faith" and move towards the signing of a nationwide ceasefire.

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Highlights



High-level meetings of the General Assembly
(New York, 22-30 September)



United Nations Climate Summit 2014
(New York, 23 September)



Conference on Small Island Development States
(Apia, 1-4 September)

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