

Ad Hoc Group of Experts on
the Standardization of
Geographical Names
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There are, as of March 1970, thirty-four United Nations member states in the region "Africa South of the Sahara". Of these, seventeen use English for international communications, sixteen use French, and one Spanish. They probably all have minority languages which either are unwritten or are not fully analysed and described.

This committee should address an enquiry to these states, seeking the following informations :

- a) is there a national authority dealing with geographical names ?
- b) if so, what is its membership and method of working ?
- c) is there a gazetteer or geographical names index, published or unpublished ?
- d) what method is used for recording names from any unwritten languages and rendering them into spellings used on official maps ?

The object of asking questions is to elicit some response, even if this is only negative.

However, we should at the same time, draw the states' attention to the existence and aims and functions of this Committee and to some of the papers presented at Geneva, e.g., the Principles of Transcription (presented by France pp 137-142, Vol.2, Proceedings of the Conference and Technical Papers) and the Structure of a National Names Authority (Kenya, pp 103-104) and enquire whether they would like any information or assistance from either the Ad Hoc Group of Experts or the regional Expert.