

48. The United Nations concise gazetteer of the world in one or two volumes for international use was discussed as to its content, specifications and the scale of reference maps to be used for its compilation. The Conference requested the Group of Experts to undertake more detailed study.

49. The possible use of a United States Board on Geographic Names gazetteer, as amended by the country covered, in the production of provisional international gazetteers, was discussed and the Group of Experts was requested to continue to consider the matter.

50. The gazetteer of the Federal Republic of Germany (E/CONF.69/L.42/Add.1) exclusively containing coded descriptive data designed for computer processing and output, was important as an outstanding example of its type and the Group of Experts would be apprised of its effectiveness from time to time. The Federal Republic of Germany also undertook to inform the Group of Experts of the problems or benefits that might be noted in the process of updating the names file and the subsequent production of revised versions.

51. The United States of America outlined its computer-based Geographic Names Information System, developed by the United States Geological Survey for handling domestic names. The system could provide, on demand, up-to-date information in upper- and lower-case typography in a variety of output media, such as computer print-out, cathode ray tube (CRT), microfilm, microfiche, magnetic tape, disc or punch-cards.

52. Canada reported that, at both the federal and provincial levels, considerable work had been done on the automated handling of geographical names and the production of gazetteers through the use of computer technology.

53. Nigeria reported that a new edition of the Gazetteer of Geographical Names for Nigeria had been produced and had been exhibited at the sixth session of the Group of Experts. The gazetteer had been revised in order to adopt local names and to take account of administrative changes and would soon be published. Liberia mentioned the second edition of its gazetteer.

Action by the Conference

54. On the recommendation of Committee II, the Conference adopted resolutions on the specifications of international gazetteers (resolution 2) and on automated data processing (resolution 3).

Report on the work of Committee III

Exonyms (item 13)

Definition of exonyms

55. It was agreed that it was difficult to arrive at a satisfactory definition of the term exonym but it was evident that in order to apply resolution 28 of the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, 11/ lists of exonyms should not include those spellings that differed from the original

11/ Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, vol. I..., p. 15.

which the original generic had been translated. Lists should similarly exclude those forms of names that were derivations or that differed from the original by the addition of endings (case and so on) necessary in certain languages and those derived by declension or by the addition of suffixes. However, it was agreed that those exceptions should not invalidate the general principle recognized at the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names that nationally standardized names, including all diacritics, must be respected. It was also suggested that conversion as such of a name from one writing system to another should not, as a rule, be considered as constituting "exonymisation". The point was made by Poland that lists of exonyms, as understood above, should not include the use of derived and translated forms in common use.

Reduction of exonyms

56. The principle of the progressive reduction of exonyms was reaffirmed. Nevertheless, the difficulty of establishing criteria and norms by which those exonyms to be eliminated were chosen was underlined. A number of countries presented documents in which exonyms were categorized according to the nature and extent of their usage. The Chairman saw particular advantage to the five-fold categorization made by Spain:

1. The local official name is never used either in its written or spoken form
2. The local official name is used only in a limited number of cases
3. Usage varies according to the background of the user
4. Name is used in a limited number of cases found only in literature
5. Name is found only in old sources (maps and the like).

57. Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, the German Democratic Republic, Guatemala, Malaysia, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America stated that they had prepared at least partial lists of the exonyms in use in their respective principal languages.

58. It was agreed that the problem of the progressive reduction of exonyms should be examined further in the light of the proposed classification by type of exonym and structural differences of languages (as set out in E/CONF.69/L.68 and L.121). That would be a matter for the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names to study, in collaboration with the countries and/or divisions that had worked in the field. It was desirable that the preparation of provisional lists of exonyms by country should continue between now and the fourth conference.

Practicability of carrying out a reduction of exonyms

59. It was emphasized that the reduction of exonyms and their replacement in usage by national or local forms of names was meeting with, and was likely to continue to meet with, lively resistance from the people who used those exonyms. It was important to have an idea of the eventual success of the effort to reduce exonyms, so that the work undertaken in that context in different countries was not rendered useless. It was therefore suggested that studies and tests should be carried out to evaluate the success of the various attempts to introduce local forms of geographical names into general use at various levels: schools, mass communications and the like. Each country would be in the best position to make an evaluation as to the use of foreign names in its own territory.

Names of new States

60. It was suggested that on the creation of a new State, it should be stressed that the national form of the name concerned should be used to the exclusion of all exonyms. Some countries, however, saw difficulties in the application of such a general principle. After discussion, a draft resolution on the subject was proposed for adoption by the Conference.

Policies, procedures and co-operative arrangements for the naming of features beyond a single sovereignty (item 14)

Features common to two or more countries (item 14 (a))

61. Nigeria drew attention to the need for revision of resolution 25 of the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names ^{12/} to cover cases in which two countries using the same language failed to agree on a single name. An appropriate draft resolution was recommended for adoption. It was noted that document E/CONF.69/L.50, submitted by the German Democratic Republic, described in detail specific procedures in the German Democratic Republic for the treatment of geographical names of features shared by two or more countries.

Maritime and undersea features (items 14 (b) and (c))

62. Mr. Randall (United States of America), who had been Convenor of the Working Group on Undersea and Maritime Features of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names since the last Conference, summarized the activities of the Working Group. He drew attention to the programme of the Group, as cited on pages 13 and 14 of annex II to the report on the sixth session of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names, held in New York in 1975 (ESA/RT/C/GN/4). That report called for members to review policies, principles and a proposal form used by the United States Board on Geographical Names to determine whether they might serve as a model for international use; develop a list of terms and definitions for undersea features; and prepare a list of corresponding terms and definitions in other languages. The activities of the Working Group were described in document E/CONF.69/L.24, which also presented several recommendations for the consideration of the Conference. Those recommendations were based on suggestions submitted by several members of the

^{12/} Ibid., p. 14.

Working Group and specifically included proposed guidelines for the standardization of the names of undersea and maritime features, a name proposal form and a list of terms and definitions relating to undersea features. The Committee gave approval to the report with the provision that its recommendations would be co-ordinated with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). The representative of Hungary referred to document E/CONF.69/L.28, which related to the programme of the Working Group and made various suggestions concerning the adequacy of the USBGN principles and proposal form. Mr. Randall pointed out that many of the statements were no longer valid because of the action reported in document E/CONF.69/L.24. The recommendation to co-ordinate the programmes of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names with IHO, a point made by Hungary and other delegations, was recognized as appropriate.

63. The representative of Hungary mentioned the differences in the current use of undersea names and the desirability of standardizing them.

64. Admiral Kapoor (IHO) expressed his appreciation for the work of the United Nations on standardization of the names for maritime and undersea features. He informed the Committee that IHO would be glad to extend its fullest co-operation in this work. In outlining the activities of IHO in the standardization of nautical charts and other hydrographic publications, he referred in particular to the international charting programme. The observer from IHO informed the Committee that there were a number of technical committees working on standardization and that a working group was to be formed to review and update Special Publication No.23, which dealt with limits of oceans and seas. In that context he thanked the authors of document E/CONF.69/L.101 for their valuable contribution which would be given due attention while the Special Publication was being revised. In referring to document E/CONF.69/L.100, Admiral Kapoor stated that the list of terms and definitions had been developed for international use by scientists and hydrographers within the joint International Hydrographic Organization/Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission programme for the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO). The list had been approved by the GEBCO committee and the International Hydrographic Conference.

65. The Chairman welcomed the results of co-operation between the United Nations and the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and several nations stressed the need to develop such co-operation as a matter of some urgency. The United Kingdom expressed the view that neither the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names nor the present Conference could resolve questions connected with the limits of oceans and seas except through close contact with IHO. The United States of America spoke in support, drawing attention to the future need for studies on the identification and naming of ocean features. The Committee accepted the need to standardize names internationally once the limits of oceans and seas had been reviewed and updated in the proposed revision of Special Publication No. 23.

66. The representative of the United States of America cited a publication that contained a list of names of undersea features approved by the United States Board on Geographic Names since the issue of the last Undersea Feature Gazetteer in 1971. Disseminated as document E/CONF.69/L.110, the list was a supplement to the gazetteer and was part of a new series to be released periodically to interested organizations.

67. In response to a question concerning a possible international authority for approving undersea names, the Chairman stated that if nations conformed to standard procedures for naming features and keep other nations informed, no single agency would be necessary.

Extraterrestrial features

68. The Chairman summarized the current position and gave an account of activities of the Working Group on Extraterrestrial Features of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names 13/ between the Second and Third United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names. A working arrangement had been set up with the International Astronomical Union (IAU). The Chairman of the IAU Working Group responsible for banks of names for extraterrestrial planetary features attended a meeting of the sixth session of the Group of Experts in New York in 1975. The Chairman of that Working Group subsequently attended a meeting of the IAU Working Group in Moscow.

69. In document E/CONF.69/L.33 the United States of America explained that USBGN had set up an Advisory Committee on Extraterrestrial Feature Names, one whose roles was to make available to production agencies those names approved by IAU.

70. The representatives of the United Kingdom and others expressed the view that the use of Latin in extraterrestrial names had resulted in variant translations of the terms used and stated that as a consequence each language would tend to use its own generic terms for extraterrestrial features.

71. Some countries, among them Poland and Hungary, had submitted suggested lists for naming extraterrestrial features to the Chairman of the Working Group of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, who submitted them to the International Astronomical Union. The representative of India stated that it had names to suggest for extraterrestrial features and emphasized that the form of proposal should be included in the report of Committee III and that the agency to which the form must be sent should be named. Greece stressed the importance of the participation of all States Members of the United Nations in the procedure of naming extraterrestrial features.

72. The Vice-Chairman outlined the interdisciplinary nature of the work of extraterrestrial nomenclature and stressed the need for close co-operation of scientists from various disciplines in establishing a list of entities to be named; moreover, he referred to cases in which terms and definitions used in the description of planetary surfaces were misleading, and he suggested that members could play a role in helping to clarify terms and definitions.

Action by the Conference

73. In connexion with the work of Committee III the Conference adopted resolutions on the names of countries (resolution 17); the study of exonyms (resolution 18); lists of exonyms (resolution 19); names of features beyond a single sovereignty (resolution 20); maritime feature names (resolution 21); undersea feature names (resolution 22); and extraterrestrial feature names (resolution 23).

13/ See report of the Working Group on Extraterrestrial Features in annex III to the reports of the fifth and sixth sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (ESA/RT/C/GN/3 and 4); see also E/CONF.69/L.33.