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THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

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Item 7 of the provisional agenda.

Reports by divisions and Governments
on the situation in their regions and
countries and on the progress made in
the standardization of geographical
names since the Second United Nations
Conference on the Standardization of
Geographical Names

REPORT ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION
OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC SINCE THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN
1972*

Paper presented by the German Democratic Republic

* Prepared by the Board of Surveying and Mapping in the Ministry of the
Interior of the German Democratic Republic.

On the occasion of the third UN conference on the standardization of geographical names the following report on the progress made in the field of standardizing geographical names in the GDR since the second UN conference (1972) on the standardization of geographical names is submitted:

1. On 18th September, 1973, the German Democratic Republic was admitted to the United Nations Organization. This implied for the GDR the possibility of actively and constructively cooperating in solving the tasks facing the conferences of the United Nations in connection with the standardization of geographical names. It was already before the German Democratic Republic's admission to the United Nations that the two preceding UN conferences on the standardization of geographical names (1969 and 1972) received reports, by the good offices of friendly socialist countries, on developments in the GDR of activities in this particular field, which were published in the UN documents on these conferences (E/CONF. 53/L.81; E/CONF. 61/L.94).

These reports elucidated the principles and regulations worked out in the GDR for the national standardization of geographical names and specified the relevant documents published. The German Democratic Republic is fully aware of the great significance of the standardization of geographical names for purposes of communication and sees in it a means to a better understanding among nations and to a peaceful cooperation of countries in many spheres of social life.

2. Following the German Democratic Republic's admission to the United Nations Organization the GDR government took decisions on an active and constructive cooperation in the UN conferences on the standardization of geographical names. They relate in particular to the further qualification of activ-

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ities in the field of the standardization of geographical names in the German Democratic Republic and to the evaluation of the outcome of the 2nd UN conference on geographical names in London (1972) and of the results of the deliberation of the UN group of experts on geographical names in New York (1975).

In the period under review the German Democratic Republic took an active part also in the 6th deliberation of the UN group of experts on geographical names in New York (March 1975) and in the deliberations of the Dutch-German language department as well as of the East Middle European and Southeast European department and of the USSR department (in the two last-mentioned departments as an observer) of the UN group of experts on geographical names.

3. Progress was also made in the national standardization of geographical names on the territory of the GDR. In addition to the

"Allgemeine Richtlinie für die Schreibweise geographischer Namen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik", 2nd edition, Berlin 1970,

(General guideline for the spelling of geographical names of the German Democratic Republic), which covers the most important names of the mountain ranges, mountains, lakes, rivers, landscapes etc. on the territory of the GDR, the "Ortslexikon der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik" (Encyclopaedia of places in the German Democratic Republic) published by Staatsverlag der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik in 1974, and the "Verzeichnis der Gemeinden der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik" (List of communities in the German Democratic Republic) published in 1976 also by Staatsverlag der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik represent newly revised bases for the spelling of place names in the GDR.

According to Art. 40 of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic geographical names in regions of the counties of Dresden and Cottbus, which are inhabited by people of the Sorb nationality, are used also in their Sorb linguistic form. The spelling of these names is specified in the

"Sorbisch-deutsches und deutsch-sorbisches Ortsnamenverzeichnis der zweisprachigen Kreise der Bezirke Dresden und Cottbus"

(Sorb-German and German-Sorb list of place names in the bilingual districts of the counties of Dresden and Cottbus) published by Domowina-Verlag Bautzen 1969.

4. The implementation of resolutions 28 and 29 adopted at the 2nd UN conference on the standardization of geographical names (London 1972) led to further advances in reducing exonyms (conventional geographical names) and, in keeping with resolution 28 of the afore-mentioned conference, to the compilation of a list of exonyms and its publication in 1975 under the title

Allgemeine Richtlinie für die Schreibweise sonstiger geographischer Namen in kartographischen Erzeugnissen der DDR"

(General guideline for the spelling of other geographical names in cartographic products of the GDR).

5. The "Instruktion für die Schreibweise geographischer Namen in kartographischen Erzeugnissen der DDR" (Instruction for the spelling of geographical names in cartographic products of the GDR) was published by the Ministry of the Interior, Board for Surveying and Mapping, in its fifth revised edition in 1974 and in its sixth revised edition in 1977. This Instruction is continuously brought up to

date and has turned out to be an effective document on the standardized spelling of geographical names in the German Democratic Republic. Particulars concerning the structure and the contents of this Instruction are contained in the "Bericht über den Stand der Standardisierung geographischer Namen in der DDR" (Report on the level reached in the standardization of geographical names in the GDR), which was submitted on the occasion of the first UN conference on the standardization of geographical names (Geneva 1967) (E/CONF. 53/L.81).

6. For a number of European countries

"Allgemeine Richtlinien für die Schreibweise geographischer Namen"

(General guidelines for the spelling of geographical names) were published. These Guidelines contain information on documents relating to the established spelling of names in cartographic products, the application of exceptional rules, the appellatives as well as the lists of geographical names. A list of the most important abbreviations has been included as well. In the period under review such Guidelines were issued for the Socialist People's Republic of Albania (1972), the Kingdom of Norway (1973), the Kingdom of Sweden (1973), the Polish People's Republic (1974), for Luxembourg, Malta, Liechtenstein, Andorra, San Marino, the Vatican City and Monaco (1974), for the Republic of Greece (1975), and the Republic of Finland (1976). All these documents continue the series of Guidelines the publication of which started in 1976. Similar Guidelines for the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Ireland are to be published soon.
