

The Working Group on gazetteers met on Friday, March 9 at one p.m. Questions raised during the discussion in the GECN were considered.

It was made clear that the making of an ideal international gazetteer for each country will involve much work and cannot be expected to begin in the near future. In order to avoid a great delay it was deemed highly desirable, to convert on a provisional basis the BGN gazetteers into UN gazetteers.

The outcome would be that - like the I.M.W. sheets published by different countries - the UN would cosponsor them and take the responsibility of reporting on them. This would be made explicit by the application of the UN seal on the title-page together with the mention "edited according to the rules set up by the Group of Experts on Geographical Names of the United Nations" and by a forward in the three working languages of the UN.

Necessary conditions for the conversion of a BGN gazetteer into a UN gazetteer are the approval by the GECN and the approval by the country concerned. How the latter may be fulfilled without a complicated legal procedure is still under consideration.

It was deemed necessary that the maintenance and the improvement of these gazetteers would be carried out in cooperation between BGN and the country concerned.

The following questions were identified but not solved: a) what ought to be done with American exonyms (conventional names), that the US board need to have listed somewhere; b) what is to be done with the coded designations of geographic features.

The Working Group did not discuss the question raised during the discussion in GECN as to what ought to be the scope and the contents of the international gazetteers and in how far these would be different from other kinds of gazetteers, e.g. national gazetteers. No objection was felt however against individual countries editing their national gazetteers under the seal of the UN and with the mention "edited under the auspices of the United Nations", providing that these gazetteers are made in accordance with the resolution 4, recommendation E of the Geneva Conference.