

Sixth Session  
New York, 5-26 March 1975

REPORT BY THE EXPERT FOR LATIN AMERICA

PROFESSOR FRANCIS GALL

With the most respectful greetings to the Experts present at this sixth session convened upon an invitation by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a report on main activities is given below which covers the period since the fifth session held 6-16 March 1973. Due to obvious reasons, and as it was desired to have it as up-to-date as possible, it was not possible to present it within the requested time for advanced reproduction.

In order to present the several activities as well as possible, this report has been divided into (I) National and (II) Regional.

I. NATIONAL

1.1 National Names Authority

All matters related to standardization are carried out by the National Names Authority of Guatemala, established in the year 1959 by Engineer Alfredo Obiols Gómez, at that time Director General of the National Geographic Institute (Instituto Geográfico Nacional). The working procedures were set forth on 20 July 1960. They have been adapted to the evolutive requirements based on recommendations of our two United Nations conferences and five sessions. By reason of office, the Director General of the National Geographic Institute is the President of the National Names Authority.

1.2 National Standardization

It is based in Guatemala as prescribed by Presidential Resolution dated 20 May 1959.

1.3 Geographical Names on Official Maps

In accordance with the files which are kept open for updating as completely as possible within the human factor, the geographical names which by its own

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ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES, PROFESSOR DOCTOR FRANCIS GALL, AT ITS SIXTH  
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I.2 NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

It is based in Guatemala, as prescribed by Presidential Resolution dated May 20, 1959.

I.3 GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES ON OFFICIAL MAPS

In accordance with the files which are kept open for updating as completely as possible within the human factor, the geographical names which by its own

nature are dynamic, are so presented on the official maps of the National Geographic Institute. Their natural evolution, result of investigations as well as field and office treatment, is also annotated on the cartographic documents by this writer, for future action.

#### I.4 1973 POPULATION CENSUS

The Eight *de jure* Population Census was carried out April 7, 1973, by the General Directorate of Statistics (Dirección General de Estadística). In accordance with the verbal agreement entered upon, Statistics will not publish the detailed results of the country at municipal level, without prior adoption of the official geographical names and categories. This work by the Expert is now in progress, within the most ample spirit of cooperation. It has to be underscored, that the Census results are at this date preliminary for the 326 municipalities of the country, on the basis of a 5% sampling.

#### I.5 THIRD AGRICULTURE AND CATTLE CENSUS

This Census, also to be carried out by Statistics, is now in the planning stage. For this purpose, a previous study and comparison with the official lists of names of rural properties, as officially registered will be made, using the files of the National Names Authority.

#### I.6 MAIN NATIVE LANGUAGES

- a. Everything related to the native languages of the country is entrusted by law to the National Institute of Indian Affairs (Instituto Indigenista Nacional). Among others, following organizations come under said Institute: The Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Francisco Marroquín Project, and so forth.
- b.(1) The Expert is taking active part in the joint revision and up-dating of the main twenty native languages of Guatemala. Upon his request, for the time being the problem is being focused from the practical point of view of usage by Spanish speaking teachers for the native population, adapting the alphabets as far as their phonemics and phonetics is concerned, to a practical orthography for regular Spanish keyboard typewriters and linotype settings, with charts of examples in the initial, middle and final positions.
- b.(2) The work itself is very complex, as can be understood by the distinguished linguists here present. To make it short, the native Guatemalan languages are unwritten. The problem becomes more complex, due to several practical and cultural considerations: Certain conventional signs can be difficult to reproduce. Also, the minority groups are very jealous of their identity, requiring an adjustment of a more universal notation of the geographical names within their areas. As with everything that possesses life, toponyms are subject to constant evolution. Consideration has to be given also to the utility of the material to be published, acknowledging the three main methods for transcription of the sounds of speech (phonetic, phonemic and practical), with an additional adjustment for foreigners using the geographic material.
- b.(3) It can be anticipated that we will be arriving at the phase of standardized alphabets, with their respective examples, and which will be published firstly as an appendix to the National Geographical Dictionary of Gua-

temala. They will be preceded by a General Introduction to the main languages, with a diagram of the organs of speech, including a list of abbreviations and adjectives, adapted from a working paper presented at our Geneva Conference, for additional facility by the user.

## 1.7 GEOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

- a. Lastly, but not the least important, work is being carried out actively in the original of the Geographical Dictionary, intended to be published as soon as possible. The work will be known as its second edition. However, it is completely new. In accordance with arrangements made, it will be also printed by the local official Tipografía Nacional. The National Geographic Institute will furnish the paper and ink,
- b. The Dictionary will contain not only the standardized geographical names as of when their obtention was closed for this purpose, but also information, as published, taken from the maps edited at said date by the Instituto Geográfico Nacional, with their coordinates and corresponding sheet name and number. The Expert is carrying out everything related to this work. The previous Dictionary was printed in four volumes: 1960/1961 and 1968. At the present time, about 7,000 pages of the original have been typed and duly edited.
- c. It is estimated that the work has been thus completed in about two thirds. The required aid is stressed, essential also at this stage, in order to conclude this important work which can be said to be unique in this Continent. The second edition is now very actively worked upon. Besides geographical data it will also contain diverse complementary information such as cartographic, linguistic, demographic, geological, historical, ethnographical and so forth, precisely within the scope of Human Geography. It will also include 23 charts or sketches of the Departments in which the country is divided.
- d. It is not deemed necessary to stress here the importance of said work. Suffice it, to mention the fact that I worked previously on the four printed volumes. The completely new material comprises about 200,000 individual sheets or entries, each one ranging all the way from two lines up to several typed pages.

## II. REGIONAL

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### FIRST SOUTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

- II.1 Convened by the Government of Brazil, it was held in Brasilia September 17-22, 1973. Also upon request of said Government, this Expert arrived on the 12th., when the Organizing Commission was formed at the United Nations Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as appears in the Proceedings by the Rapporteur.

II.2 All matters pertaining to this Conference, to which the Expert presented 12 of the 17 working papers studied and commented upon by the Delegations from Argentine, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, as well as Observers from Spain and Portugal, is contained in the printed report by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. Additional printed copies are available and will be gladly furnished upon request. For said Conference, this Expert was elected Vice-President.

### III. THIRD REGIONAL CENTRAL AMERICAN MEETING ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

III.1 Upon personal request made at the Seventh Central American Cartographic Week and in accordance with its Resolution # 13, the Government of Costa Rica carried out the Meeting in the city of San José March 25-29, 1974. Said Government also requested prior assistance from the Expert, who arrived on the 20th. of said month. Official delegations arrived from Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, as well as Observers from Mexico, United States of America, Suriname, Spain and Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH). Herewith is presented a copy of the Final Record of Proceedings, as well as of different reports and working documents of Delegations and the book "Geographical Names of the Bocas del Toro Province", in Spanish, published by Panama. This writer presented 12 different working papers and also gave a lecture at the University of Costa Rica on "Notes for carrying out geographical studies". One day after cloture of the Meeting and as a result of previous request made to the President of the Meeting, in the same room where the Third Meeting had been held, the Meeting of the Panamerican Committee on Geographical Terminology of PAIGH was held.

III.2 Within a spirit of frank collaboration, possible help and assistance was offered, to the effect that a certain Pan American Committee of one of the Specialized Organisms of the Organization of American States at long last should be not only functional but also have a working program with two or three clearly defined aims. Spontaneous assistance, perhaps due to misinterpretation by the responsible person, had later-on to be withdrawn. In Suriname, for instance, the rightness of one of the suggestions which had been made was ascertained, in the sense that for the first known time within the history of PAIGH, a copy of the proposed Glossary was sent. As it was understood, an approximate amount of 30% of errors was thus detected by the proper cartographic agency.

III.3 In fact, the above mentioned withdrawal was made, as in accordance with what had been resolved previously, each Division Expert is the only one who is entrusted and in charge of all technical matters within his own assigned Division. As it is not believed that this item really matters whatsoever, no further details are deemed necessary at all. However, it therefore never could be said to have been personal motives, as it falls precisely within the sphere of action of the Division entrusted to each of us Experts. The offer made, after evaluating all factors involved, may still be reinitiated in view of hemispherical importance

in the first place. Above everything else, what is resolved regarding geographical names by all and each Division Expert, is of the utmost transcendancy and of world scope.

- III.4(a) In accordance with its resolution 6, the Third Meeting decided to entrust this Expert with the study of the Spanish definition regarding shores and islands. This, due to the reason that the previous ones had been adopted and printed in Costa Rica, and question as to their correctness was raised. On the other hand, the Third Meeting requested that the new definitions should be included in the Glossary to be printed, based on what had been done by the Working Group on Definitions.
- III.4(b) As a result of consultations made, a conclusion was arrived at, in the sense that for the time being it was not considered convenient for inclusion in the Glossary which is being prepared. Furthermore, this Expert sustains the opinion that they pertain to designatory terms. However, as a resolution was urged in order to omit hybrid constructions which also refer to designatory terms, the Expert notified accordingly on May 8, 1974 the Chairman of the Third Meeting, as those definitions were needed for work carried out urgently in Central America. The Chairman, in turn, on May 20, 1974, transcribed the letter of the Expert, which also contained considerations regarding designatory terms derived from Latin and Greek morphemes, proposing the use of:

- (i) *Insulonimia* and *insulónimo*, instead of *insunimia* and *insunónimo*; *actonimia* and *actónimo*, instead of *litonimia* and *litónimo*,
- (ii) In view of the fact that at the present time there do not exist in the Spanish language definitory terms of the mentioned geographical neologisms, the use of following was proposed for Central America, in the understanding that the English translation is non-official and only for the purpose of the present Report:

*Actonimia* : A body of toponyms pertaining to features which border on lakes or shores.

*Actónimo* : A toponym which is applied to a feature which borders on a lake or sea.

*Insulonimia* : A body of toponyms which pertains to islands.

*Insulónimo* : A toponym which is applied to an island.

- III.4(c) It is true that there exists difficulty in specifying concise equivalents in English, French and Russian, reason for which the Coordinator of the Working Group on Definitions stated in his circular dated May 3, 1974, the convenience of setting them aside at this time, as well as that this action on behalf of the Working Group in no way precludes the use of the terms when desired, or their consideration at a later time. It is also true that to make a transposition - if necessary -, would be difficult in English (*paralonymy*, *paralonym*, *nesonymy*, *nesonym*), or in any of the other official United Nations languages.

III.4(d) As already mentioned, the use of the definitory terms was made in a provisional manner. This problem is herewith presented to the Experts, with the respectful request that they should study the problem during this session, in order to be advised.

IV SECOND REGIONAL SOUTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

As shown in the pertaining documents of the First Conference held in Brasilia, and as a result of personal requests made, Argentine offered to host the Second Conference, whose exact date has not been fixed yet. Upon request of Argentine, the writer furnished already a project of the bylaws and agenda covering main technical items to be treated. A preliminary meeting was held in Buenos Aires, October 1974.

V FOURTH REGIONAL CENTRAL AMERICAN MEETING ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

In accordance with Resolution # 16 of the Third Regional Meeting, Honduras offered to be host country and Nicaragua alternate host country for the Fourth Meeting, tentatively scheduled for the middle of 1976. The Director General of the National Geographic Institute of Honduras requested verbally several days ago the aid and assistance of the Expert, which of course was confirmed.

VI FIRST LATIN AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

It has been a strong desire of the writer, as Expert of the Latin American Division, to hold a full Conference of the Division entrusted to him. To this effect, some conversations have been already held. For the time being, it is deemed premature to enter into details, but full information on this subject will be given with due time in advance. Also, advice will be sought and requested from the other Division Experts.

VII TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUA

Upon request of the Director General of the National Geographic Institute of Nicaragua, the writer went to Managua February 12-17, 1974. He helped out in order that said country could establish its National Names Authority. The pertaining documents were also drafted together, in accordance with the country's requirements. All documents were delivered to the above-mentioned Director General, who promised the pertaining action, as he was fully aware of the needs.

VIII TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SURINAME

VIII.1 Requested by the Minister of Reconstruction of Suriname, the stay in said country was 9-22 September, 1974. The program had been worked out by the Cartographic Office (Centraal Luchtkaartering), Paramaribo.

VIII.2 A Seminar was held at Ons Erf, presided by the Ministers of Reconstruction, District Decentralization and Education, as well as by the Director of the Cartographic Agency. On this occasion, the writer gave two lectures in English: "Popular Explanation on the purpose and necessity of Standardization of Geographical Names", and "Annotations on the topic of Toponymy". This last one, due to the fact that at the last moment and for reasons of health it was impossible for the distinguished friend, Professor Doctor Ferdinand J. Ormeling, to attend. The writer prepared also the working paper "Toponymy: Some notes regarding the science of Onomastics", which was reproduced and circulated. Copies of these three documents have been sent to the United Nations, requesting its reproduction and circulation at this sixth period of sessions; this, of course, in case the Netherland's Expert is in accordance with it.

VIII.2(a) The Seminar, which honored the writer appointing him Honorary President, was held for three days near Zanderij International Airport. The aims and objectives of a national names authority (Raad voor Geografische Namen) were discussed, on basis of information previously furnished. Two projects to be issued as laws were also drawn up. On the eve of the second day, the distinguished friend, Doctor P. D. Blok arrived, sent by Professor Doctor Ormeling. His assistance, especially regarding certain Netherland's phases, was very much appreciated.

VIII.2(b) The second phase of the Seminar, comprising field obtention and treatment of names, was at Dribabiki island. There were also present personalities like Mr. H.N. Dahlberg, Mr. H. Ch. Eersel, Mr. J.H. Kolader and anthropologist Mrs. H. Malberg-Guicherit, as well as officers of the Mapping Agency, Forestry Department, KLM Aerocarto and of the Summer Institute of Linguistics stationed at Suriname.

VIII.2(c) According to recent information received from Suriname, the legal projects were delivered to the Ministry of Reconstruction, whose lawyers have already stated that they would make certain legal but not fundamental modifications. The persons who participated at the Seminar, mentioned under item 2(b), have also met several times and good progress has been achieved. Due to the fact that the Ministers and members of Parliament have been busy with the budget details, the pertaining will be decided upon until the present time.

VIII.2(d) It is a pleasure to deliver to the United Nations Library, for use by all concerned, one copy of following publications obtained at Paramaribo:

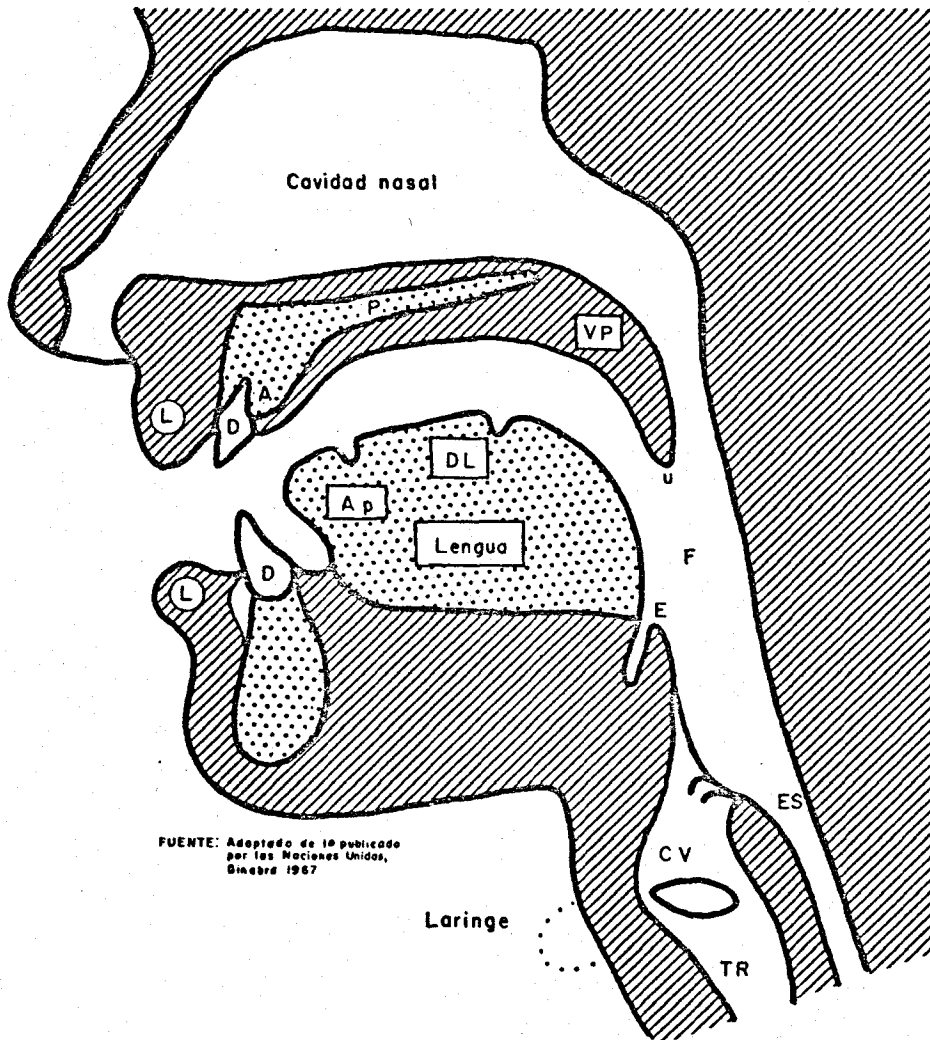
- (i) Government Resolution Number 8072, dated August 17, 1960, regarding Surinamese vernacular or Sranan-Tongo.
- (ii) Glossary of the Surinamese Vernacular.
- (iii) 800 usual sentences in Ndjuka, Dutch and English.
- (iv) Languages of the Guianas: Published in Mexico, 1972, by the Summer Institute of Linguistics in 560 copies.



IX DIVERSE

- IX.1(a) The Government of Honduras stated Officially through its Director General of the National Geographical Institute, that in the first part of 1975 assistance by the writer would be requested. In September 1974 this matter was also discussed at the airport in Tegucigalpa with the two persons of said country who will be entrusted with the work pertaining to the Geographical Dictionary and general geographic matters. However, due to Fifi hurricane, it seems that this project has been postponed.
- IX.1(b) The National Geographic Institute of Honduras has already carried out planning of activities, and also designed several information sheets. It also designed a form of geographical investigation containing aspects of physical, political and Human Geography which were sent to the Majors of the country. Within the working scope, it also drafted forms in order to obtain information of the physical aspects of islands and island names; oronymy; hydronymy and populated places.
- IX.1(c) The information for the Department of Atlántida was tabulated, taking as a base the 1:50,000 scale sheet maps and listing 1,005 toponyms by alphabetical order with their geographical description, as well as of the outstanding natural features and listing 67 small populated places (hamlets) which do not appear on the maps.
- IX.1(d) In the same manner, investigation was initiated on the second Department, Cortés, having at the present time compiled about 50% of preliminary geographical data.
- IX.1.(e) As notified, Honduras will publish its Geographical Dictionary by Departments, beginning with those of Atlántida and Cortés.
- IX.2 El Salvador has published two volumes of its Geographical Dictionary.
- IX.3 Panama has published the second volume of its Geographical Dictionary.
- IX.4 Conversations were held in Panama and in Caracas, related to functions, technical assistance and work in charge of the writer. As soon as the dialogue will become more concrete, the matters will be fully reported.
- IX.5 Due to the fact that it is believed to be of basic importance and not having our functions, aims and modus operandi regulations properly up-dated, on October 8, 1973 and again on November 24, 1974, copy of what at that time had been discussed and adopted, was sent with the request that the document should be circulated among our Group of Experts, so that during this sixth session it could be brought up-to-date. For this, it has been considered indispensable to change the wording of the present item 10 of our provisional agenda, due to factors pointed out since 1973. With the presentation of this problem, it is hoped that a favorable solution can be reached at during our present period of sessions.
- IX.6 Additional information required, in order to amplify any of the items covered by this report, will be gladly furnished upon request.

## DIAGRAMA DE FONACIÓN



FUENTE: Adaptado de lo publicado por las Naciones Unidas, Ginebra 1967

Abrevia-  
tura

Órgano de fonación

Adjetivo

A	alvéolo de los dientes	alveolar
Ap	ápice de la lengua	apical/cimero
CV	cuerdas vocales	glotal
D	dientes	dental
DL	dorso de la lengua	dorsal
E	epiglotis	epiglotal
ES	esófago	esofágico
F	faringe	faríngeo
L	labios	labial
P	paladar	paladial
TR	tráquea	traqueal
U	úvula	uvular
VP	velo del paladar	velar y/o postvelar