



## Economic and Social Council

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### Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

New York, 31 July – 9 August 2012

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

#### Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams since the Ninth Conference

### Report of the Task Team for Africa

Submitted by the Task Team for Africa\*\*

#### Summary\*\*\*

Since the last UNGEGN Session, several actions have been active in the Task Team for Africa.

Among them, we can particularly mention:

- 1) The joint meeting with the Government of Botswana, ECA / UN and the UNGEGN in Gaborone in November 2011 where a declaration called "Gaborone Action Plan (GAP)' has been adopted.

After a diagnosis on the situation of the standardization of geographical names in Africa, a detailed plan defining the mechanisms that would revitalize and promote the toponymic activities in Africa was set and attached to the GAP.

In its meeting held in December 2011 in Cape Town in South Africa, The Stat / Com, endorsed the recommendations contained in this plan.

- 2) In addition, several steps have also been initiated with ECA / UN in order to boost the toponymic activities in Africa. It was decided that ECA / UN should be more involved in raising awareness about the benefits of standardization of geographical names in different sectors: Economic, Cultural, social, security, emergency in case of natural disasters, etc.

Thus, it was decided, by mutual agreement, that the subject of geographical names be included in the agenda of various meetings organized by ECA / UN notably that of CODIST.

- 3) In addition, the Task Team for Africa and the African experts in collaboration with the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson of UNGEGN and representatives of the ECA / AU took the opportunity of participating in the workshop on the Standardization of Geographical Names held by the South African Department of Arts and Cultures in April 2012 in Johannesburg, South Africa, Gaborone to review and discuss again the Gaborone Action Plan, especially about the financial difficulties that may impede its implementation.

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\* E/CONF.101/1.

\*\* Prepared by the Task Team for Africa

\*\*\* The full text of the report is being issued in English only as document E/CONF.101/27

To this end and to capitalize these actions and allow the Task Team for Africa to continue to carry properly its action in favor of African countries and to make the continental and regional intergovernmental structures benefit from the advantages of the standardization of geographical names in the economic and social development of African countries, it was decided to send letters to the different African continental structures, such as the African Development Bank and ECA / UN, to solicit their aid and support in implementing the provisions of the 'Gaborone Action Plan.

- 4) Another African achievement that deserves to be mentioned is the ECA's recent development of the Africa GeoNyms software which is being tried out by many African countries.

Finally, the Task Team for Africa, would like to express its gratitude and appreciation to all countries that have offered us their help and assistance especially for allowing to some participants from African countries to attend this Conference.