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

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names:
meetings and work in the period 2007-2012

Summary**

Since the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of
Geographical Names, held in 2007, the Group of Experts has convened two
sessions: the twenty-fifth session, held in Nairobi in 2009, and the twenty-sixth
session, held in Vienna in 2011. Both sessions were well attended, had many papers
filed and included special presentations, workshops, exhibitions and informal
meetings of divisions and working groups.

Between the sessions, ongoing work has been undertaken by Member States,
the 23 geographical/linguistic divisions, 10 working groups, a task team for Africa
and a coordinating group for toponymic guidelines.

The sessions have followed advances in implementing United Nations
resolutions, often through the activities of the working groups, and have assured the
continuity of training, both through courses around the world and through web-
based toponymy course units. The Group of Experts has made a special effort to
raise the profile of geographical names standardization in Africa, has coordinated
with the International Geographical Union and the International Cartographic
Association to realize the establishment of a joint working group/commission linked
with the needs of the Group, has facilitated the production of a press kit and
promotional postcards for the sessions, and has promoted the work of the Group at
recent meetings of the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information
Management.

* E/CONF.101/1.
** The full report was prepared by Helen Kerfoot (Canada), Chair of the United Nations Group of
Experts on Geographical Names, and is available in the language of submission only from
The website of the Group of Experts has been expanded to include the archival documents of most of the conferences and sessions, a world geographical names database, sample national documentation relevant to standardization and a portal to national authorities and online toponymic databases. The Group has established or maintained liaison with a variety of international organizations dealing with the study, use and standardization of geographical names.