

Group of Experts on
Geographical Names

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WORKING PAPER

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TENTH UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL
CARTOGRAPHIC CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC*

1. The Tenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific was held at Bangkok, Thailand, from 17 to 28 January 1983. The Conference was held in accordance with resolution 1981/6 adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 4 May 1981.
2. The Conference was attended by 185 representatives and observers from 38 countries and territories and six intergovernmental and international scientific organizations.
3. Agenda item 6 entitled, "Geographical names, including matters to be referred to the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names" was allocated to Committee III, the report on its work being given below as well as the text of resolution 15 on geographical names. The documents referred to in the text are available for consultation with the Secretary.
4. WORK OF COMMITTEE III: TOPOGRAPHIC AND LARGE-SCALE MAPPING, CADASTRAL SURVEYING AND URBAN MAPPING (INCLUDING LAND INFORMATION SYSTEMS), GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES, INCLUDING MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES.

The Committee reviewing recent developments in the field of standardization of geographical names considered the papers presented under this item and noted the following:**

* Report of the Secretary

** Document E/CONF.75/5

C. GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

150. The Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names submitted a divisional report (E/CONF.75/L.87) that was an update from 1980 and covered the enlargement of the Division and the production of a 1:7,000,000 political map of South East Asia and of various gazetteers. A pilot training course in toponymy was successfully completed in June 1982 in Indonesia and resulted in resolution 6 of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Geneva, 24 August-14 September 1982 (see E/CONF.75/CRP.2).⁵

151. Australia submitted a paper entitled "Selection of topographic names for the national map series" (E/CONF.75/L.4), which describes the derivation of topographic names for national mapping, from map series R 502 (supplemented, updated and corrected from state authorities' work and by field work) and the derivation of a gazetteer. The Australian representative explained that the assignment of hierarchies for the various feature name codes in the data bank for derived topographic mapping had worked well for cartographic purposes, but was now being found inadequate as a multipurpose data base for current digital techniques.

152. Cyprus also reported on geographical names in a paper under that title (E/CONF.75/L.83). Despite its small size, Cyprus is heir to a rich cultural heritage and has a large number of toponyms. A gazetteer of the 2,000 most important toponyms has been produced and exhibited. The problems of transcription of Greek geographical names into the Roman alphabet have been resolved by Greece and Cyprus. No transcription of Turkish names is made since they are already in the Roman alphabet. Work on a full gazetteer continues.

153. The Federal Republic of Germany submitted a paper entitled "Geographical names: capture, preparation, storage and use by means of electronic data processing" (E/CONF.75/L.27). This detailed paper describes the compilation of the gazetteer of the Federal Republic of Germany and its value for the compilation of new maps by automated cartography. The various forms of output are described.

154. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reported on the work carried out in the field of standardization of geographical names in the USSR since 1980 in the paper under that title (E/CONF.75/L.97). This paper reviews progress in derivation of rules for rendering names into the Russian language and the production of dictionaries of foreign names by various official departments.

Ad hoc working groups

155. A working group was set up to consider the problems of implementing land information systems and cadastral workshops. It produced three draft resolutions. A further working group was set up to consider the work done by the Geographical/linguistic Division for Asia South-East and Pacific South-West of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. This working group drafted one resolution. All four of these draft resolutions were approved by the Committee for presentation to the plenary meeting. They were adopted by the Conference as resolutions 12 to 15. (For the text of the resolutions, see chapter VII below.)

15. *Geographical names*

A

The Conference,

Recalling resolution 15 on geographical names adopted by the Ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific,¹⁵

Recognizing that the Asia, South-East, geographical/linguistic division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names has been enlarged and renamed the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division,

Recognizing further the progress which has been made towards standardization of geographical names through the co-operation of the members of the enlarged Division for Asia South-East and Pacific South-West of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names,

1. *Recommends* that the work of the Group of Experts for the Division should be continued and that all member countries in Asia South-East and Pacific South-West be urged to contribute to and participate in the activities of the Group of Experts;

2. *Further recommends* that the representative of Malaysia should continue to represent the Division as its Chairman.

B

The Conference,

Taking into account the success and benefit obtained through the first pilot course in toponymy, held at Cisarua, Indonesia, in June 1982,

Endorses resolution 6 of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names,¹⁶ which recommends "the holding of similar courses and seminars in other geographical/linguistic divisions and further recommends that a submission should be made by the Cartography Section of the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat on behalf of the Conference for the provision of the necessary funds to provide for such courses and seminars".

C

The Conference,

Recalling resolution 15 of the Ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific,¹⁷

Noting Working Paper No. 4 submitted by the United Nations Secretariat to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names at its tenth session,

Recognizing that considerable demands exist within the Asian and Pacific countries for a map containing standardized geographical names for major geographical features,

Recognizing further the advantages of publishing a regional map as a preparatory step towards publishing a composite map of the world,

Recommends that the Cartographic Unit of the Department of Conference Services of the United Nations Secretariat should be urged to give priority to the task of compiling, publishing and distributing a regional map of Asia and the Pacific with standardized geographical names.