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Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

New York, 8-17 August 2017

Items 5 and 9 of the provisional agenda*

Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference (for distribution only)

National standardization

Geographical name databases used for the benefit of sustainable development and national intangible heritage: National Institute of Cartography and Remote Sensing

Summary**

Toponymy, when applied to a country, region, city or other geographical territory, refers to the entire collection of names assigned to each and every component entity of such a territory. These names are studied from various angles: their origin, their meaning, the circumstances of their attribution to the places they identify, their linguistic evolution and the way they are used at the local, regional, national and international levels.

Toponymy is a science that draws primarily on geography, history and linguistics. Other disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, cartography and even geopolitics, are also relevant to a proper understanding of the importance of the two core functions of toponymy: identifying places and using names to convey information.

As the body responsible for Algerian cartography and for promoting its use in various sectors and activities, the National Institute of Cartography and Remote Sensing has been working since its establishment to collect reliable multi-scale toponymic information that accurately reflects the reality on the ground and the specificities of Algeria's geography, and to organize the information into databases. It also advocates for the dissemination of that information for global use.

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full text, prepared by Hassen Abdellaoui, Director General of the National Institute of Cartography and Remote Sensing (Algeria), is available in the language of submission only from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html> (document E/CONF.105/11/CRP.11).



The Algerian toponymic database, at different scales, is employed in various sectors and by various research applications and projects. It is updated incrementally as map coverage progresses. Standardization of the database is of crucial importance and has been accorded the highest priority in the national research programme.
