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**11<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the Standardization of  
Geographical Names**

New York, 8 -17 August 2017

Item 6 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 Tenth Conference**

**Report of the Romano-Hellenic Division**

Submitted by the Romano-Hellenic Division\*\*

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\*\* Prepared by Andrea CANTILE – Chairman of the Romano-Hellenic Division.

## **REPORT OF THE ROMANO-HELLENIC DIVISION 2014**

After a short period of slowdown in its activities, the Romano-Hellenic Division (RHD) re-activated its action on the occasion of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of UNGEGN (New York, 2014), during a meeting, which was attended by the distinguished experts of Canada, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Romania, and the representative of the International Union of Geographers.

In 2015, a special meeting on “Status of national standardization of geographical names in the Romano-Hellenic area” and the International Scientific Symposium “Place names as intangible cultural heritage” took place in Florence, from 26 to 27 March. The event was hosted by the Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI), under the auspices of the Accademia della Crusca, the IGMI and the Government of the Tuscany Region. Twenty experts on geographical names attended the symposium and presented their papers as linguists, historians, geographers, planners and cartographers. The papers highlighted the efforts of the United Nations in national and international standardization of place names, the importance of the geographical names in safeguarding and preserving heritage, the relationship between historical maps and toponymy, *genius loci* and identity, etymological studies, vernacular place names, new toponyms, toponymy and landscape, the recent historical toponymic database of Tuscany Region and the role of Geographical Names Authorities for the preservation of toponymic heritage.<sup>1</sup>

In 2016, following the actions taken during the previous year and after the decisions taken in the last meeting, held in Bangkok on the occasion of the 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session, the RHD has:

- Activated a cooperation with the French-Speaking Division;
- Activated a cooperation with the Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage and the Working Group on Country Names;
- Established new links with the experts of Andorra, Portugal and Romania;
- Reactivated and updated its divisional website<sup>2</sup>;
- Cooperated with the UNGEGN for the implementation of the “UNGEKN World Geographical Names” (the multilingual, multiscriptual dataset of names of countries, capitals and major cities);
- Translated and disseminated the Wikipedia entry on the UNGEGN in Italian (in the near future other translations will be made in Greek, Portuguese, Romanian and Turkish);
- Disseminated also a special text “About the UNGEGN-RHD” in English and Italian (in the near future other translations will be made in French, Greek, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish and Turkish).

### ***Next scheduled activities***

For the next two years, the Romano-Hellenic Division planned:

- The celebration of the World Geographical Names Day in cooperation with Universities, Scientific Academies and Public Institutions;
- A new divisional meeting and scientific symposium on “Geographical names and Cartography between History and Geography” that will be hosted by Italy, in June 2018.

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<sup>1</sup> The Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI) published the proceedings of the symposium. For the index of the book, please see the *UNGEKN Information Bulletin*, No. 52, May 2017 p. 26. To order the book, please contact the IGMI: [casezcomm@geomil.esercito.difesa.it](mailto:casezcomm@geomil.esercito.difesa.it).

<sup>2</sup> The website is now published in draft form: [https://www.igmi.org/en/toponomastica?set\\_language=en](https://www.igmi.org/en/toponomastica?set_language=en). Any suggestion is welcome.