



United Nations

**Eleventh United Nations
Conference on the
Standardization of
Geographical Names**

New York, 8 – 17 August 2017

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Note

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Chapter I

Organization of the work of the Conference

A. Terms of reference

1. The Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was held at United Nations Headquarters from 8 to 17 August 2017, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2016/259.

B. Opening of the Conference

2. The Director of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat opened the Conference.

C. Attendance

3. The Conference was attended by 278 participants. The list of participants is available from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgn.htm>.

D. Election of the President

4. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August 2017, the Conference elected, by acclamation, as President of the Conference, Ferjan Ormeling (Netherlands), who gave a welcoming address.

5. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Director of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

E. Organizational matters

1. Adoption of the rules of procedure

6. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August 2017, the Conference adopted its provisional rules of procedure.¹

2. Adoption of the agenda

7. Also at its 1st plenary meeting, the Conference adopted its provisional agenda (E/CONF.105/1). The agenda as adopted was as follows:

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President of the Conference.
3. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the rules of procedure;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Election of officers other than the President;

¹ The rules of procedure, as contained in document E/CONF.105/2, are available from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgn.htm>.

- (d) Organization of work;
 - (e) Credentials of representatives to the Conference.
4. Reflection on the past, present and future: the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.
5. 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).
6. 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.
7. National and international meetings, conferences, symposiums, publicity and publications.
8. Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits.
9. National standardization:
 - (a) Field collection of names;
 - (b) Office treatment of names;
 - (c) Treatment of names in multilingual areas;
 - (d) Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures;
 - (e) Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
10. Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous, minority and regional language names).
11. Exonyms.
12. Toponymic data files and gazetteers:
 - (a) Content requirements and standards;
 - (b) Data management and interoperability;
 - (c) Data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services).
13. Terminology in the standardization of geographical names.
14. Writing systems and pronunciation:
 - (a) Romanization;
 - (b) Conversion into non-Roman writing systems;
 - (c) Writing of names in unwritten languages;
 - (d) Pronunciation.
15. Country names.
16. Toponymic education.
17. Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation:

- (a) Features common to two or more nations;
 - (b) Bilateral/multilateral agreements.
18. Arrangements for the Twelfth Conference.
 19. Adoption of resolutions of the Conference.
 20. Adoption of the report of the Conference.
 21. Closing of the Conference.

3. Election of officers other than the President

8. At the same meeting, the Conference elected the following officers:

Vice-Presidents:

Brahim Atoui (Algeria)
Andreas Hadjiraftis (Cyprus)

Rapporteur:

Peder Gammeltoft (Denmark), assisted by Wendy Shaw (New Zealand)

Editor-in-Chief:

Trent Palmer (United States of America), assisted by Eman Orieby (Egypt)

4. Organization of work

9. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August 2017, the Conference approved its proposed organization of work ([E/CONF.105/INF/2/Rev.2](#), in English only) and established four technical committees. The Conference also elected the officers and allocated agenda items to the technical committees as follows:

Technical Committee I: National standardization (agenda item 9 and sub-items (a)-(e)) and Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous minority and regional language names (agenda item 10))

Chair:

Annette Torensjö (Sweden)

Vice-Chair:

Sungjae Choo (Republic of Korea)

Rapporteur:

Leila Mattfolk (Sweden), assisted by Gerhard Rampl (Austria)

Technical Committee II: Toponymic data files and gazetteers (agenda item 12 and sub-items (a)-(c))

Chair:

Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu (Germany)

Vice-Chair:

Rizka Windiastuti (Indonesia)

Rapporteur:

Allison Dollimore (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Technical Committee III: Exonyms (agenda item 11); Writing systems and pronunciation (agenda item 14 and sub-items (a)-(d)); and Country names (agenda item 15)

Chair:

Peter Jordan (Austria)

Vice-Chair:

Kohei Watanabe (Japan)

Rapporteur:

Catherine Cheetham (United Kingdom)

Technical Committee IV: Terminology in the standardization of geographical names (agenda item 13); Toponymic education (agenda item 16); and Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation (agenda item 17 and sub items (a) and (b))

Chair:

Leo Dillon (United States)

Vice-Chair:

Naima Friha (Tunisia)

Rapporteur:

Susan Birtles (Australia)

10. Agenda items 1 to 8 and 18 to 21 were considered in plenary meetings.

5. Credentials of representatives to the Conference

11. Also at its 1st plenary meeting, the Conference agreed, in accordance with rule 3 of the rules of procedure, that the Credentials Committee would be composed of the President, the two Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur, supported by a representative of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It also decided that the Credentials Committee would examine the credentials of representatives and report to the plenary without delay.

12. At its 15th plenary meeting, on 17th August 2017, the Credentials Committee reported that the credentials of the representatives had been found to be in order.

F. Documentation

13. The list of documents before the Conference is posted on the website of the Eleventh Conference.²

² Available from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgn.htm>.

Chapter II

Summary of the work of the Conference

A. Plenary meetings

14. At the 1st meeting, on 8 August 2017, the President drew the attention of the Conference to former members of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) who had passed away since the Tenth Conference. These included Mr. Ojārs Bušs of Latvia, Mr. Abdelhadi Tazi of Morocco, Mr. Allan Rostvik of Sweden and Dr. Richard “Dick” Randall III of the United States of America.

Reflection on the past, present and future: the Fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (agenda item 4)

15. The Conference considered item 4 of its agenda at its 1st, 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 8 and 9 August 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it for presentation, conference room papers CRP.49, CRP.59, CRP.79, CRP.122, CRP.148 and CRP.159, CRP.160, CRP.161 and CRP.163. At its 1st meeting the Conference heard a presentation by the representative from Canada (on behalf of the Bureau of the Group of Experts). At its 2nd meeting, the Conference heard presentations by representatives from Denmark (on behalf of the Norden Division), Austria (on behalf of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division), Latvia (on behalf of the Baltic Division), Jordan (on behalf of the Arabic Division), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the Bureau of the Group of Experts) and Denmark (on behalf of the Bureau of the Group of Experts). At its 3rd meeting, the Conference heard a presentation by the Chair of the Group of Experts. The representatives of Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and the liaison officer with the International Consortium of Universities for Toponymic Education made comments or raised questions.

16. Special presentations were given by the United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management Co-Chair and the President of the Conference and representative of Canada.

17. The President of the Conference introduced the draft resolution “Future organization and methods of work of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names”, contained in document E/CONF.105/CRP.163, and proposed that the Chair of the Group of Experts, Mr. William Watt (Australia), serve as facilitator of the informal consultations on this draft resolution.

Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Ninth Conference (agenda item 5)

18. The Conference considered item 5 of its agenda at its 14th meeting, on 16 August 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it for information conference room papers CRP.7, CRP.9, CRP.14, CRP.22, CRP.24, CRP.25, CRP.28, CRP.30, CRP.31, CRP.33, CRP.35, CRP.37,

CRP.48, CRP.51, CRP.53, CRP.55, CRP.57, CRP.61, CRP.65, CRP.75, CRP.76, CRP.81, CRP.82, CRP.86, CRP.89, CRP.93, CRP.95, CRP.96, CRP.97, CRP.103, CRP.107, CRP.117, CRP.118, CRP.119, CRP.120, CRP.121, CRP.128, CRP.138, CRP.139, CRP.143, CRP.144, CRP.145, CRP.151 and 156.3

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 (agenda item 6)

19. The Conference considered item 6 of its agenda at its 11th and 12th meetings on 15 August 2017.

20. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.8, CRP.12, CRP.23, CRP.27, CRP.41, CRP.42, CRP.50, CRP.52, CRP.54, CRP.60, CRP.68 and CRP.83, CRP.84, CRP.102, CRP.108, CRP.110, CRP.129, CRP.147, CRP.149, CRP.150, CRP.155 and CRP.163. At its 11th meeting the Conference heard a presentation by the representative from Cameroon, France, Germany, Poland, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The President and the representatives of Algeria and Canada made comments or raised questions. At its 12th meeting, the Conference heard presentations by representatives from Austria, Brazil, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Panama, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, South Africa and the United States of America. The President and the representatives of Canada and Algeria made comments or raised questions.

National and international meetings, conferences, symposiums, publicity and publications (agenda item 7)

21. The Conference considered item 7 of its agenda at its 3rd meeting on 9 August 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.15, CRP.19, CRP.64 and CRP.92, and for information, conference room papers CRP.130 and CRP.131. The Conference heard presentations by the representatives from Latvia and the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), the International Cartographic Association (ICA) Chair, Joint International Geographical Union (IGU)/ICA Commission on Toponymy and the liaison officer for the ICA. The representatives of Austria, Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands and the Russian Federation made comments or raised questions. Statements were made by the representatives from Japan and Republic of Korea.

Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits (agenda item 8)

22. The Conference considered item 8 of its agenda at its 3rd and 4th meeting on 9 August, 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it for presentation, Conference room papers CRP.3, CRP.6,

³ For country reports, please see: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/unegcnConf10.html>, item 4.

CRP.36, CRP.132 and CRP.158. At its 3rd meeting, the Conference heard presentations by the Group of Experts Secretariat, and the representatives of Egypt and New Zealand. At its 4th meeting the Conference heard presentation by the Convenor of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation (Republic of Korea) and Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the Bureau of the Group of Experts).

23. The representatives of Algeria, Australia, Cyprus, Germany, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Panama and the State of Palestine made comments or raised questions.

Arrangements for the Twelfth Conference (agenda item 18)

24. At the 14th meeting on 16 August 2017, the Conference accepted the proposal of the President of the Conference (Netherlands) not to discuss this item considering the proposed draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council on the future organization and methods of work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (see Chapter III, resolution XI/2).

Closing of the Conference (agenda item 21)

25. At the 16th plenary meeting, on 17 August 2017, the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs gave concluding remarks. The President subsequently declared the Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names closed.

Actions taken by the Conference

Adoption of resolutions of the Conference (agenda item 19)

26. At its 15th plenary meeting, on 17 August 2017, the rapporteur read the text of the draft resolutions. The Conference adopted 4 resolutions emanating from the Plenary and the Technical Committees (see Chapter III below). The representative of the Republic of Korea made a statement, indicating that until ECOSOC adopts the draft resolution as contained in the document E/CONF.105/L.3, the existing arrangements for the 12th UNCSGN Conference would continue to be in effect.

Adoption of the report of the Conference (agenda item 20)

27. At its 16th plenary meeting, on 17 August 2017, the Conference considered item 20 and reviewed the text of the draft report of the Conference submitted by the Rapporteur of the Conference (English only).

28. The Conference adopted the draft report contained in document E/CONF.105/L.2 as orally amended, and decided to entrust the Rapporteur with finalizing the report with the support of the Secretariat.

B. Technical Committee I

National standardization (item 9)

29. Technical Committee I considered agenda item 9 (National Standardization) and sub-items 9(a) to 9(e), at its 4th to 7th meetings held on 9 to 11 August 2017.

Field Collection of names (agenda item 9 (a))

30. For its consideration of the agenda item 9(a), the Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.29, CRP.72, CRP.85, CRP.105 and CRP.115. The Technical Committee I heard presentations by the representatives from China, Indonesia (two papers) and Oman. The Chair of Technical Committee I (Sweden) and the representatives of Algeria, Singapore, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America raised questions or made comments.

Office treatment of names (agenda item 9b)

31. For its consideration of the agenda item 9(b), the Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.69, CRP.74, CRP.77, CRP.87, CRP.104, CRP.133, CRP.153, CRP.154 and CRP.157. The Technical Committee I heard presentations by the representatives from Algeria, China, Finland, the Netherlands, Republic of Korea, South Africa (two papers), Sweden, the United States of America. The Chair of the Technical Committee I (Sweden) and representatives of Australia, Austria, Botswana, Estonia, Germany, India, Latvia, the State of Palestine, Sweden, Tunisia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland raised questions or made comments.

Treatment of names in multilingual areas (agenda item 9c)

32. No papers were submitted under this agenda item

Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures (agenda item 9d)

33. For its consideration of the item 9(d), the Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.21, CRP.73, CRP.99, CRP.134, CRP.135 and CRP.152. The Technical Committee I heard presentations by the representatives from Austria, Canada, the Republic of Korea (two papers), South Africa and Sweden. The Chair of the Technical Committee I (Sweden) and the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Norway, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America raised questions or made comments.

Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors (agenda item 9e)

34. For its consideration of the item 9(e), the Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.26, CRP.32, CRP.43, CRP.78, CRP.80, CRP.109, CRP.142 and CRP.146, and, for information, conference room paper CRP.164. The Technical Committee I heard presentations by the Coordinator of Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use and the representatives from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Malaysia, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Chair of the Technical Committee I (Sweden) and the representatives of Austria, Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland raised questions or made comments.

Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous, minority and regional language names) (agenda item 10)

35. Technical Committee I considered item 10 of the agenda at its 7th and 8th meeting on 11 August 2017. For its consideration of the item 10, the Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.38, CRP.44, CRP.56, CRP.70, CRP.88, CRP.94, CRP.98, CRP.101, CRP.106, CRP.111, CRP.140 and CRP.141, and, for information, conference room paper CRP.11. The Technical Committee I heard presentations by the representatives from Austria, Canada, China, Estonia (two papers), Germany, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Zealand, Norway (two papers) and the State of Palestine. The UNGEGN Chair, the Chair (Sweden) and Vice Chair (Republic of Korea) of the Technical Committee I and the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Austria, Botswana, Canada, Denmark, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sweden and Tunisia raised questions or made comments.

C. Technical Committee II

Toponymic data files and gazetteers (item 12)

36. Technical Committee II considered agenda item 12 (Toponymic data files and gazetteers) and sub-items 12(a) to 12(c) at its 8th and 9th meetings held on 11 and 14 August 2017.

Content requirements (agenda item 12 (a))

37. No papers were submitted under this agenda item.

Data management and interoperability (agenda item 12 (b))

38. For its consideration of the item 12(b), the Technical Committee II had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.40, CRP.100 and CRP.136. The Technical Committee II heard presentations by the representatives from Australia, Canada and Germany. The Chair of the Technical Committee II (Germany) and representatives of India, Indonesia, Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Google raised questions or made comments.

Data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services) (agenda item 12 (c))

39. For its consideration of the item 12(c), the Technical Committee II had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.34, CRP.39, CRP.46, CRP.47 and CRP.58. The Technical Committee II heard presentations by the representatives from Cyprus, Germany and Japan. The Chair (Germany) and representatives of Austria, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Estonia, Republic of Korea, the Netherlands and the United States of America raised questions or made comments. The representative of Turkey made a statement. The representative of Cyprus replied.

D. Technical Committee III (Exonyms, romanization, country names)

40. Technical Committee III considered agenda item 11 (Exonyms), agenda item 14 (Writing systems and pronunciation) and sub-items 14(a) to 14(d) and item 15 (Country names) at its 9th to 11th meetings held on 14 and 15 August 2017.

Exonyms (agenda item 11)

41. For its consideration of agenda item 11, the Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room papers E/CONF.105/16/CRP.16, E/CONF.105/17/CRP.17, E/CONF.105/18/CRP.18, E/CONF.105/45/CRP.45, E/CONF.105/62/CRP.62, E/CONF.105/112/CRP.112, and E/CONF.105/116/CRP.116. The Technical Committee III heard presentations by the representatives from Austria (three papers), Germany, Indonesia and Poland. The Chair of the Technical Committee III (Austria) and the representatives of Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, Egypt, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and International Consortium of Universities for Toponymic Education (ICUTE) raised questions or made comments.

**Writing systems and pronunciation (agenda item 14)
Romanization (agenda item 14 (a))**

42. For its consideration of item 14(a), the Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room papers E/CONF.105/63/CRP.63, E/CONF.105/137/CRP.137, E/CONF.105/125/CRP.125. The Technical Committee III heard presentations by the Coordinator of the Task Team for Africa (Algeria), the chair of the Arabic Division (Jordan) and Poland. The Chair of the Technical Committee III (Austria) and representatives of Algeria, Estonia, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia raised questions or made comments.

Conversion into non-Roman writing systems (agenda item 14 (b))

43. For its consideration of item 14(b), the Technical Committee III had before it, for information, conference room paper E/CONF.105/71/CRP.71.

Statements were made by the Chair of the Technical Committee III (Austria) and representatives of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Writing of names in unwritten languages (agenda item 14 (c))

44. For its consideration of item 14(c), the Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room paper E/CONF.105/123/CRP.123. The Technical Committee III heard a presentation by the representatives from the coordinator of the Task Team for Africa (Algeria). The Chair of the Technical Committee III (Austria) and the representative of South Africa raised questions or made comments.

Pronunciation (agenda item 14 (d))

45. No document was submitted under this agenda item.

Country names (agenda item 15)

46. For its consideration of item 15, the Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room papers E/CONF.105/13/CRP.13 and E/CONF.105/113/CRP.113. The Technical Committee III heard presentations from the Convenor of the Working Group on Country Names (United States of America), and Indonesia. The Chair of the Technical Committee III (Austria) and the representatives of Australia, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Tunisia, Turkey and the United States of America raised questions or made comments. The representative of Greece made a statement.

E. Technical Committee IV

Terminology in the standardization of geographical names (agenda item 13)

47. Technical Committee IV considered items 13, 16 and 17 of the agenda at its 13th and 14th meetings on 16 August 2017. For its consideration of this item, the Conference had before it for presentation conference room paper CRP.124. The Conference heard a presentation by the representative from Algeria. The representatives of Algeria, Austria, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America made comments or raised questions.

Toponymic education (agenda item 16)

48. The Committee considered item 16 of the agenda at its 13h meeting, on 16 August 2017. For its consideration of this item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room papers CRP.66, CRP.67, CRP.127, and CRP.162. The Conference heard presentations by representatives from the Netherlands and the International Consortium of Universities for Toponymic Education (ICUTE). The representatives of Algeria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, New

Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Vietnam made comments or raised questions.

Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation (agenda item 17)

49. The Committee considered item 17 of the agenda, sub-item (a) and (b) at its 13th and 14th meetings, on 16 August 2017.

Features common to two or more nations. (item 17 (a))

50. No papers were submitted for sub-item (a).

51. Representatives from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, and the Republic of Korea, made comments in relation to this item. Statements were made by the representatives from Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Bilateral/multilateral agreements (agenda item 17 (b))

52. For its consideration of this item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room paper CRP.144. The Conference heard a presentation by a representative from Indonesia. The representatives of the Netherlands and Tunisia made comments or raised questions.

F. Special Presentations

53. During the Conference, the following special presentations were given:

(a) “United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)”, delivered at the 1st meeting by the UN-GGIM Co-chair, Mr. Timothy Trainor (United States of America). The President and representatives of Canada, Indonesia, Germany, Australia, Norway, the State of Palestine, South Africa and Azerbaijan made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(b) “A reflection of UNGEGN capacity building programme and communication and publication activities”, delivered at the 2nd meeting by the President of the Conference, Mr. Ferjan Ormeling, and the representative from Canada, Ms. Helen Kerfoot. The representatives from Cyprus and the observer from ICUTE made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(c) “Building a map for everyone”, delivered at the 3rd meeting by the observer from Google, Mr. Ethan Russell. The President, the Rapporteur and the representatives of the State of Palestine, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, Australia, Indonesia, Singapore, Azerbaijan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(d) “Geographical names standardization in Africa: challenges and constraints”, delivered at the 4th meeting by Mr. Brahim Atoui (Algeria) and Ms. Naima Friha

(Tunisia). The President and the representatives of Algeria, India, Botswana and Morocco made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(e) “New York City urban names”, delivered at the 5th meeting by Prof. Irena Vasiliev, SUNY College at Geneseo. The Vice-President and the representatives of Austria, Saudi Arabia, Canada, the State of Palestine, Denmark and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(f) “Positioning geospatial information to address global challenges”, delivered at the 6th meeting by Mr. Chee Hai Teo, United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management Secretariat, United Nations Statistics Division”. The President and the representatives of Finland, Australia, Egypt, Denmark, Cameroon and the observer from Google made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(g) “Mapping our seas, oceans and waterways - more important than ever”, delivered at the 7th meeting by Yves Guillam, Assistant Director, International Hydrographic Organization. The President and representatives from the United States of America, Japan, Indonesia and New Zealand made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(h) “Field names in the Tyrol - collection, standardization and cultural aspects”, delivered at the 9th meeting by Gerhard Rampl (Austria). The President and representatives from Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Algeria, Finland and Germany made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(i) “How the NYC Data Analytics Team Responded to and learned from a Catastrophe”, delivered at the 11th meeting by the observer from Esri, Mr. Amen Ra Mashariki. The Vice President and representatives from the State of Palestine, Australia, the Netherlands, Sri Lanka, India, Iraq and Panama made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(j) Global Population Distribution Modeling”, delivered at the 12th meeting by the observer of the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), Columbia University, Mr. Greg Yetman. The President and representatives from the State of Palestine and Australia made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(k) “Māori geographic naming in New Zealand, with emphasis on the Treaty of Waitangi”, delivered at the 13th meeting by Mr. Mark Dyer (New Zealand). The President and the representatives from Australia, South Africa, Austria, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, India, Canada, Sweden, Germany and Saudi Arabia made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(l) “Second Administrative Level Boundaries (SALB)” delivered at the 14th meeting by Mr. Guillaume Le Sourd, United Nations Geospatial Information Section. The President and representatives from Japan, the United States of

America, Cameroon, Saudi Arabia, Cyprus, Austria, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

(m) “Waze” delivered at the 15th meeting by the observer from Waze, Mr. Adam Fried. The President and representatives from Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Cyprus, New Zealand, the State of Palestine, Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

G. Panel Discussions

54. During the Conference, the following panel discussions occurred:

(a) “National Geographical Names Authorities”, conducted at the 5th meeting under agenda item 9 (c) was chaired by the representative of Denmark. The Panel comprised representatives of Canada, Czechia, Italy, the Republic of Korea and Norway. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panelists and the representatives of South Africa, Indonesia, Australia, Botswana, Finland, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, the Netherlands and Latvia participated.

(b) “Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage”, conducted at the 8th meeting under agenda item 10, was chaired by the representative of Tunisia. The Panel comprised representatives of Algeria, Brazil, Cameroon, Denmark, Egypt, Republic of Korea and Sweden. The panel discussions were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panelists and representatives of Japan, Austria and Indonesia participated.

(c) “United Nations resolutions on the reduction of exonyms: witnesses of the past or guidelines still observed?”, conducted at the 10th meeting and under agenda item 11, was chaired by the representative of Austria. The Panel comprised representatives of Canada, the Netherlands, Japan and Poland. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panelists and representatives of Australia, Tunisia, the United States of America, Algeria, Japan and Saudi Arabia participated.

(d) “Making Geographical Names Data Accessible and Available”, conducted at the 12th meeting and under agenda item 12, was chaired by the representative of New Zealand. The Panel comprised representatives of Cyprus, Germany, Indonesia and New Zealand. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panelists and representatives of Australia, Austria and Panama participated.

(e) “Writing names in so-called non-written languages”, conducted at the 14th meeting under agenda item 14, was chaired by the representative of Algeria. The Panel comprised representatives of France and Estonia. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the

panelists and representatives of the United States of America, the Republic of Korea, Cameroon, Australia, Indonesia, Algeria and Japan participated.

(f) “Support of Geographical Names data files and gazetteers to United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management activities such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda”, chaired by the representative of Germany, under agenda item 12. The Panel comprised representatives of Canada, Tunisia, Denmark and Egypt. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panelists and representatives of Japan, India and Australia participated.

Chapter III

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

The Conference recommended the adoption of the following resolution by the Economic and Social Council

XI/1. Future organization and methods of work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 715 A (XXVII) of 23 April 1959, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to set up a small group of consultants to consider technical problems, to draft recommendations for the domestic standardization of geographical names and to report to the Council,

Taking note of the first report of that group, in which the group stated that it was imperative to hold an international conference on the standardization of geographical names, and of the subsequent decisions of the Economic and Social Council on convening the conferences,

Recalling also its decision 1314 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, in which it approved the terms of reference for the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which was later renamed the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names by the decision taken by the Council at its 1854th meeting on 4 May 1973,

Reaffirming the aims of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, derived from decision 1314 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, in particular the aim to emphasize the importance of the standardization of geographical names at the national and international levels and to demonstrate the benefits to be derived from such standardization,

Recalling that, in its decision 1988/116 of 25 May 1988, the Council approved the statute and rules of procedure of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and that, in its decisions 1993/226 of 12 July

1993 and 2002/307 of 25 October 2002, it approved new versions of the statute,

Taking into account General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and stressing the importance of the implementation of this new ambitious Agenda, including the relevance of the standardization of geographical names,

Recalling decision 29/101 of 29 April 2016⁴ of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, in which the Group of Experts welcomed the initiative of the Bureau of the Group of Experts to reflect on how the working modalities of the Group of Experts could be improved, took note of the specific proposals that had been made by the Bureau and agreed that it was useful to periodically review the working methods of the Group of Experts in order to respond effectively to evolving policy needs and the changing information and communications technology environment,

Recalling also its resolution 2016/27 of 27 July 2016 on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management, in which it stressed the need to strengthen the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management, in capacity-building, norm-setting, data collection, data dissemination and data sharing, among others, through appropriate coordination mechanisms, including in the broader United Nations system, building on the work of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management,

Emphasizing the breadth of experience in and the contribution of the Group of Experts towards the standardization and administration of geographical names at the national, regional and global levels, its impact across all global development themes, and the need to continue its work programme,

Recognizing that a robust, voluntary, participatory and integrated mechanism and structure consisting of working groups and linguistic and geographical divisions within a modern framework with revised methods of work will result in operational efficiencies and cost savings to Member States and across the United Nations system,

1. *Decides* that the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names will be discontinued in their current formats, be subsumed by a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council that will retain their respective mandates, where relevant, as well as resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and responsibility for the implementation thereof, be named the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which will be composed of representatives of Member States of the United Nations, including experts appointed by Governments, and will focus on technical issues associated with the standardization of geographical names that may, where appropriate, support relevant aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2. *Also decides* that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names will convene biennial sessions, in principle, over a period of five days, beginning in 2019, with the full authority to set its

⁴ See [E/2016/66](#), sect. I.B.

strategic direction and adopt resolutions to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and to be able to address the needs of a rapidly changing and expanding technical environment in a timely manner;

3. *Further decides* that the Group of Experts will convene its sessions in New York, with the option to convene sessions at an alternative United Nations venue or in a specific country, should a Member State commit to hosting and funding the session;

4. *Reaffirms* the need to consider ways to avoid duplication and overlapping of efforts, if any, as well as to strengthen the joint work between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, taking into account that places and geospatial objects referred to by geographical names should have a geospatial location established through the global geodetic reference frame;

5. *Decides* that the elected Bureau of the Group of Experts will be maintained to oversee the 2017-2019 transition, on an exceptional basis;

6. *Also decides* that the rules of procedure will be drafted by the Bureau, in close consultation with the States Members of the United Nations, and be presented to the Economic and Social Council for adoption, in line with the procedures of relevant Economic and Social Council bodies, in advance of the first session of the Group of Experts, and that these rules will be the subject of an open negotiation process and will cover, among other matters, the following points:

(a) Identification of the structure of the Bureau, election methods and terms of service;

(b) Operational structure of the Group of Experts, including the role and scope of any plenary sessions, technical committees, working groups or divisional structures aimed at providing support for countries with regard to developing and refining programmes for the standardization of geographical names;

(c) Development of a draft agenda for the first session, reflecting, wherever possible, the agendas of the most recent session of the Group of Experts and the most recent United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names;

(d) Ongoing review processes with regard to the structure and methods of work of the Group of Experts;

(e) Participation.

Resolutions adopted by the Conference

XI/2. Next meeting of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

The Conference,

Noting the achievements and the progress made in the work of geographical names standardization at the national and international levels,

Noting also the essential role played by the present Conference and by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names at its thirtieth session,

Recognizing the necessity of continuing this important work with the support of the Economic and Social Council,

1. *Recommends* to the Council that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names convene a series of meetings over a five-day period from 29 April – 3 May 2019, the operational modalities subject to ECOSOC approval of the proposed draft resolution E/CONF.105/L.3 ;
2. *Invites* the United Nations Group of Experts Bureau to initiate a process of reflection on how to further improve the working methods of the Conference and report for the next session.

XI/3. Romanization of Arabic geographical names

The Conference,

Considering resolution 8/II on the standardization of Arabic geographical names,

Noting the system adopted by Arabic experts at the conference held in Beirut in 2007 called the Unified Arabic Transliteration System;

Further noting the practical amendments and corrections carried out and agreed upon by the representatives of the Arabic-speaking countries at the 4th Arab Conference on Geographical Names, held in Beirut 2008;

Knowing that many Arab states have issued their official valid decisions on the adoption of this system so that it has become applied and stable in these countries,

1. *Recommends* the adoption of the Unified Arabic Transliteration System (Beirut 2007 system), as given in the document entitled “Romanization System from Arabic letters to Latinized letters 2007” with clarifications and amendments in Annex 1 to this document (points 1, 3, 5 and 6) for the romanization of the geographical names within those Arabic-speaking countries where this system is officially adopted.

XI/4. Expression of thanks

The Conference,

1. *Extends* its heartfelt thanks to the United Nations for the excellent arrangements and services provided for the Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names;

2. *Expresses* its particular gratitude to the United Nations Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat for its excellent organization of Conference-related matters and of the associated technical exhibition;

3. *Expresses* its gratitude to the President of the Conference and the Chairs of the Technical Committees for the effective way in which they conducted the meetings;

4. *Expresses* its appreciation to the officers of the Conference and Technical Committees, and to the officers and staff of the United Nations Statistics Division for their hard work and dedication, which greatly facilitated the business of the Conference.

