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**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 Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division
on Its Activity Between 2012 - 2017**

Submitted by the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division **

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Report of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division on Its Activity Between 2012 - 2017

The resolution to form the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names was passed at the Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held on 25 August – 3 September, 1992 in New York. At this time, experts from the following 11 countries are involved in Division's work on permanent basis: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Ukraine. Experts from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia participated in the meetings of the Division as observers.

Between 2012 and 2017, the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names held 4 working meetings:

- in 2012 in Baku (Azerbaijan);
- in 2013 in Yalta (Ukraine);
- in 2015 in Yerevan (Armenia);
- in 2016 in Chisinau (Moldova).

At its meetings, the Division considered resolutions adopted by the Tenth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and discussed the issues pertaining to their implementation. The experts exchanged information on the main trends in the national and international standardization of geographical names carried in Division's countries. When analyzed, the information testifies about progress that has been recently made by the member-countries of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names in the following areas:

1. In all Division's countries, state laws to consolidate the legal framework for standardization, usage and preservation of national geographical names were adopted. Government regulations to provide implementation of the laws were passed.

2. In Division's countries, official state bodies are appointed to take decisions on geographical names. Toponymic commissions are operational to coordinate efforts of the specialists from all organizations and agencies concerned.

3. State computer catalogues, registers and database of geographical names are successfully developed. Many of them already meet the needs of state bodies, organizations, companies and civic community in official geographical names data. The volume of information services is increasing every year.

4. In most Division's member countries, national Romanization systems are employed.

5. In some member countries, lists of exonyms are being compiled and published.

Exchange of information and experience that is a part of international cooperation contributed to the progress in the national standardization of geographical names made by the countries.

Collaboration of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division with the Baltic Division is successfully developed. Experts from Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine participated in three meetings held by the Baltic Division.

Many of Division's member-countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Ukraine), for 20 years are actively cooperating with the Working Group on Geographical Names of the CIS Member-states Council on Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Earth Remote Sensing. The Working Group pursues the task to provide a regular exchange of information on all official changes in geographical names. As a result of this cooperation the e-Bulletin "Changes in geographical names in CIS member countries" has been compiled and is being annually updated. The Bulletin includes information on more than 6 300 geographical names which have been legally changed in 11 countries since 1990. Along with the names in Russian the Bulletin comprises geographical names in a national language of a corresponding country. The Bulletin is available on the official site of Rosreestr (www.rosreestr.ru).

Azerbaijan, the Ukraine and Bulgaria participated in the international data exchange project developed by the EuroGeographics.

Experts of the Division took part in the 10th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, 28th and 29th Sessions of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names.