

**Group of Experts on  
Geographical names**

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Agenda Item 5

DEVELOPMENT ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN CHINA SINCE THE  
11TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

submitted by China Division

In the past two years , the work of standardization of geographical names in China has developed rapidly . The nation-wide investigation of geographical names started in 1980 has been basically completed except a few areas . Through the investigation , the general situation and existed problems on geographical names in China has been found and a vast amount of data on geographical names has been obtained . On the basis of the investigation , standardization of geographical names has been carried out, which laid down a foundation for the farther development of geographical names work . In order to consolidate and develop the results of the names investigation, subcommittees at all levels are sorting out the investigation data , setting up files on geographical names , providing consultant services , and editing and publishing standardized information of geographical names . "A Dictionary of Geographical Names of the People's Republic of China" consisting of 31 volumes is under compilation and will be published in succession from this year on . Some institutions are carrying out research and experiment on automated storage and retrieval of geographical names and have achieved some success .

On the aspect of the standardized romanization of geographical names, "The Rules on Spelling Chinese Place Names in the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet (the part of the names in Han language)", which clearly defined the specific principles for romanizing geographical names in the Han language, was promulgated jointly by the China Geographical Names Committee , the China Committee on Character Reform and National Bureau of Surveying and Mapping of China . For rendering foreign place names into Han characters, " A World Gazetteer ", which consists of nearly 300,000 foreign place names , has been published .

On toponymic study , in addition to the periodical publication of the two journals "Toponymic Knowledge" and "Collection on Toponymy" , some books such as "A Collection of Studies on Toponymy" were also edited and published . In order to strngthen the management of geographical names in China , "the Regulations on the Management of Geographical Names" was issued by the State Council of the People's Republic of China on January 23, 1986 , which clearly stipulated the principles , approval procedures, etc. for giving or changing place names , thus providing a legal basis for the standardization of geographical names in China . At present , the regulations are being implemented all over the country in order to promote geographical names work .