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Item 5  
of the Provisional Agenda

**REPORTS OF THE DIVISIONS**

Report of the  
Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD)  
for the period 1998 - 1999

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Submitted by: Jörn Sievers, Chairman of the Division

**Report of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD)  
for the period 1998 - 1999**

**Membership and participation**

1. In the period 1998 - 1999 experts from the following countries were members of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division:

Austria  
Belgium  
Germany  
The Netherlands  
South Africa  
Suriname  
Switzerland

2. The representative from Germany, Dr. Sievers, has chaired the Division since 1994.

3. An expert from Suriname, apparently because of lack of funds and time, was not able to participate in the Division meetings. He was informed by correspondence. There is also a continuing effort regarding the representation of the German language group of Southern Tyrol by an expert within the DGSD.

**Meetings**

4. The Division held three meetings in the reporting period:

New York, 12, 19 and 20 January 1998

Bonn, Germany, 20 October 1998

Maastricht, Netherlands, 17 May 1999

5. Each meeting was attended by between six and eleven experts. The agendas usually included the following items: - Toponymic guidelines, - Toponymic training courses, - List of exonyms, - Names data base of Europe, - Implementation of resolutions adopted by UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names as well as short reports on toponymic activities performed in the respective countries of the participants.

**Participation in UNGEGN Sessions**

6. Experts of the DGSD attended in considerable number the 19<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session and the 7<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in New York in 1998, where they collaborated actively in various Working Groups. In 1998, the South African representative to the DGSD, Dr. Raper, was re-elected as Chairman of the UNGEGN for a further period of five years. The representative of the Netherlands, Prof. Ormeling, was again assigned the convenorship of the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy. The German representative, Dr. Sievers, was confirmed as UNGEGN Liaison Officer to the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

### Toponymic guidelines

7. The status of the toponymic guidelines (TGL) as prepared by the DGSD member countries is as follows:

**AT:** TGL for Austria were issued in 1982 as a 1st edition. Several updates were submitted to the UNGEGN, the most recent one in 1994. A completely revised version was drafted in 1997 and sent to the coordinator for TGL, Dr. Raper, ZA.

**BE:** A working group, composed of members of the National Geographic Institute of Belgium and of representatives of the Flemish and Walloon section of the Royal Commission for Toponymy and Dialectology, has started to draft TGL for Belgium. The working group met twice in 1999.

**CH:** A revision of the first edition of Swiss TGL, published in 1982, is currently in progress. The second edition will consider the authoritative federal and cantonal regulations for the spelling of geographical names on cartographic products.

**DE:** The third edition of German TGL was presented at the 7<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1998. A digital version was handed over to the coordinator for TGL in October 1998. Implications of the orthographic reform of the German language on the spelling of geographical names have not yet been considered in this version.

**SR:** TGL for Suriname were presented at the UN Cartographic Conference in 1985.

**ZA:** After having published TGL for South Africa as a third edition in 1991, these guidelines required revision due to the political changes in South Africa. There are now eleven official languages, instead of two as hitherto.

### Training courses in applied toponymy

8. From 14 to 19 April 1998 Mr Raper and Mrs Möller (ZA) presented a United Nations Training Workshop on Geographical Names in Windhoek at the invitation of the Government of Namibia. The workshop, sponsored by UNESCO, was attended by some 32 participants from 13 regions of Namibia.

9. The 7<sup>th</sup> United Nations Training Course on Geographical Names was held in Pretoria from 20 to 25 July 1998. Arranged jointly by the UNGEGN, the Geography Department of the University of Pretoria, and the Names Research Institute, the course was attended by some 38 participants from Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland.

10. At the invitation of the German Government, a two-week toponymic training course will be arranged in conjunction with the 8<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 2002. Based upon Resolution No. VII/12 of the 7<sup>th</sup> UN Conference, the training course will be organized such that training course graduates will be able to participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> UN Conference.

### List of exonyms

11. Austria, Germany and Switzerland worked on a list of selected exonyms in the German language and published it in 1993. It was presented at the 17th UNGEGN Session in New York in 1994. A revision of

this list is now available on the Internet as a second edition (<http://www.ifag.de/kartographie/stagn/exonymenliste.pdf>).

12. In cooperation with the German broadcasting station 'Hessischer Rundfunk' a project has been started to present the spelling together with the pronunciation of exonyms on the Internet. The List of selected exonyms in the German language will be expanded to represent the following items: - spelling of the German exonym, - IPA transcription of the German exonym, - pronunciation of the German exonym as a 'wave file', - endonymic spelling (Roman characters), - IPA transcription of the German pronunciation adapted to the endonymic form (pronounced as endonymically as possible, and as German as necessary).

#### Concept of a European geographical names data base

13. In discussions between experts from Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland a concept of a European geographical names data base was developed. There are a number of reasons why a European geographical names data base is necessary, and why the separate national names data bases should be integrated: 1.) Mobility within Europe necessitates a standard data base from which the required names information can be obtained to fuel routing operations. 2.) For administrative purposes, in view of the unification of Europe, a central data base would be required containing name versions that have been used in some official capacity in Europe over the last decades. At least a third of the continent has changed in terms of political domination, and also with regard to its official names during this time. 3.) Coupled to these political vicissitudes, the extensive contacts between language communities in the past have lead to the emergence of sets of exonyms for nearly every language community in Europe. This is, without a proper concordance, a setback for proper communication.

14. The data base should have the functionality to search for all attributes of the names; that is to search for: - endonyms alphabetically, - name elements, such as generics, - all names belonging to a specific language, - all names belonging to a specific area, - all names belonging to a specific names category, - all exonyms belonging to a specific language, - all names belonging to a specific level of hierarchy, - and to provide historical information on the time when name versions held official status.

15. A majorly important principle of the concept is that the access to the data base will be independent of a reference language (e. g. English, French or German). All endonyms will be equally listed as main entries. This will also strictly be applied to the various endonymic name forms of border-crossing geographical features as well as to officially approved names of minority languages in a country.

16. The project is being carried out at the Institute of Geography of the Humboldt University in Berlin and is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

#### Second International Symposium on Geographical Names "GeoNames 2000"

17. The Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN) will hold a symposium on national and international standardization of geographical names in Frankfurt am Main from 28 to 30 March 2000. The symposium will be hosted by the Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie (BKG, Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy), in conjunction with the 107<sup>th</sup> session of StAGN and a meeting of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD) of UNGEGN. Registration of participants will be on 27 and 28 March.

Lectures will be held on 28 and 29 March covering the following items: - *Status of national standardization*, - *Concepts of names data bases*, - *Orthographic reform of the German language*, - *Romanization systems*, - *Exonyms*. On 30 March, a half-day excursion will be organized to visit the German broadcasting station 'Hessischer Rundfunk', including a lecture on and a demonstration of the pronunciation data base of the German broadcasting association.

### Orthographic reform of the German language

18. The reform became effective in the German-speaking countries and regions in 1998/1999. Geographical names will or can be affected by the reform as well. However, geographical names are similarly treated like personal names. That means that the spelling of a geographical name, or the change of a spelling, cannot be executed by simply applying the orthographic rule or by a decision of a names committee. In Germany in the case of names of populated places (about 250 000) the spelling of a name is in general officially stated by the respective commune. In the case of hydrographic features (about 500 000) water economy authorities of the German states or other authorities are responsible. In the case of other regional geographic features (about 2 million) in general the land survey or cadastral offices are responsible. The communes are responsible for some 3 million street names.

19. In 1999 a working group was established to formulate a recommendation on the application of the reform to geographical names. The group was comprised of representatives from the Austrian and German land survey administrations, a member of the commission for the orthographic reform of the German language, and the chairman of StAGN. The group issued a recommendation that decidedly encouraged all responsible authorities to follow the rules of the reform and change name spellings accordingly where applicable.

20. As a consequence, it is not yet possible to publish a list of changes of names spellings affected by the reform. In North-Rhine Westfalia an investigation into the number and type of changes of names on the topographic map series at 1:25 000 scale is in progress.

### Report of Austria

submitted by Isolde Hausner

21. The Board on Geographical Names (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kartographische Ortsnamenkunde = AKO) of the Austrian Cartographic Commission of the Austrian Geographic Society with the status "In Connection with the Austrian Academy of Sciences" held four meetings (meetings nos 59 to 62) since the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of UNGEGN.

22. The board decided to elaborate a new edition of the "Geographisches Namenbuch Österreichs" (Gazetteer of Austria) by Josef Brey, which is out of print. Work on it is still in progress and will be finished in about three months; it will be a completely new, data base supported and updated edition, enlarged by new object categories; the results will be published as a CD-rom; a book publication is in discussion.

23. A working group of the AKO elaborated in cooperation with representatives of the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (Österreichische Raumordnungskonferenz) the ÖROK recommendation no. 46: it is recommended that place-names contained in the official gazetteer of Austrian place-names, as edited by the Austrian Central Statistical Office and /or in the official Austrian maps edited by the Federal

Office of Metrology and Surveying, should be obligatory for official usage, since they are based upon information of the relevant authorities. This recommendation is the result of endeavours to reach a higher standard for the use of geographical names within the federation.

24. The platform "Cartographic place-names studies" elaborates a list of sources for standardized geographical names for editors and cartographers.

25. The Austrian Alpine Cartography ("Österreichischer Alpenverein") reported on the edition of a new map of the "Venedigergruppe" in the scale of 1:25 000 with an enlarged inventory of names.

26. On April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1998 the founder and chairman of the AKO for many years, Prof. Josef Breu, passed away. The members of the AKO paid tribute to his merits with short reviews of his activities in the service of national as well as international names standardization.

#### Report of Belgium

submitted by Kathleen Van Doren

27. The National Geographic Institute (NGI) of Belgium collects and disseminates information with a view to co-ordinating the activities of both the public and the private sector in the field of topographic and cartographic management of ground and sub-soil. In order to promote the standardization of geographic names at the national level, it has created a working group on the standardisation of geographic names within the National Co-ordination Committee for Digital Geographic Information.

28. Representatives from the Flemish and the Walloon sections of the Royal Commission for Toponymy and Dialectology (RCTD) have been associated to that group. On behalf of the GENUNG, an NGI-RCTD select group, has started to draft toponymic directives for Belgium. The long-term objective is to discuss in a larger group other problems relating to the standardization of geographic names, especially those concerning the toponymic databases.

#### Report of Germany

submitted by Jörn Sievers

29. The Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN, permanent committee on geographical names), held four meetings in 1998 and 1999, which were attended in general by some thirty members and guests from Austria, Germany and Switzerland. From 1997 to 1999 the committee was chaired by Dr Jörn Sievers, Frankfurt am Main, and co-chaired by Dr Helmut Desoye, Vienna, and Mr Hermann Josef Paß, Euskirchen. For the coming three year period, Dr Sievers ([sievers@ifag.de](mailto:sievers@ifag.de)) was re-elected as Chairperson and Mr Paß as Vice-Chairperson. Dr Isolde Hausner, Vienna, was elected as Vice-Chairperson. Secretary of StAGN is Bernd Edwin Beinstein ([beinstein@ifag.de](mailto:beinstein@ifag.de)).

30. Addresses and detailed information about StAGN were available from the Internet: <http://www.ifag.de/kartographie/stagn/stagn.htm>. E-mail contact is by or by The activities of StAGN concentrated on the following items:

31. Toponymic guidelines of Germany - see item 7.
32. Orthographic reform of the German language – see item 18.
33. Concise Gazetteer of Germany – A preliminary version of a concise gazetteer was presented at the 7<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in New York in 1998. The gazetteer was completed in 1999 and is now available as a hardcopy version from the StAGN Secretariat. A publication on the Internet is intended.

The gazetteer contains about 1600 entries. As selection criterion for populated places a population of more than 10 000 was determined, for rivers and canals a length of more than 100 km. Other hydrographic features, geographic regions, islands, mountains, and places of cultural and touristic significance were included according to their regional importance.

An entry comprises of: the officially approved spelling of a name, its gender, the feature category, the geographical centre coordinates, and the German state ('Land') to which the feature belongs. If the official form of a name contains an adjunct in abbreviation, for the purpose of explanation, the expanded form is also indicated. In addition, acceptable procedures of word division are shown for longer names.

34. Concept of a European geographical names data base – see items 13 to 16.
35. Dictionary of geographical names of the Baltic countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States – Supported by a grant of the German Research Foundation, the gazetteer was compiled comprising geographical features located in the Commonwealth of Independent States: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan as well as in the Baltic countries Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The dictionary consists of the following parts: - A detailed *Introduction*; - The *alphabetically ordered dictionary* containing some 12 000 main entries and about 20 000 cross references; including general geographic information each main entry contains: the current original script of a name (as well as old forms of that script), a transliterated romanized form, the current transcription to the Russian Cyrillic alphabet, and the former Russian name (in Cyrillic letters); - A *systematic list of administrative units* third order of all countries; - The *alphabets of all languages* and their *transliteration tables* to the Roman alphabet as well as their *transcription tables to German*; - Hints for *pronunciation*; - *Bibliography*.

The dictionary shall be published in autumn 2000 by the Dudenverlag, Mannheim.

36. List of country names – A synoptical list of country names in the German language is being collated and compiled by StAGN. The list contains those names being used and issued by the Foreign Offices of the Republic of Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Swiss Confederation. The list is being updated continuously and published at irregular intervals. The sixth edition, extended by a list of selected non-independent regions, was published as of February 1999. The list is available on the Internet (<http://www.ifag.de/kartographie/stagn/staatennamen.htm>)

37. List of exonyms – see items 11 and 12.
38. Second International Symposium on Geographical Names "GeoNames 2000" – see item 17.
39. Eighth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names 2002 – At its Substantive Session of 1999 the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations decided on 23 July 1999 that the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names will take place in

Germany from 27 August to 5 September 2002. On the invitation of the German Government, the venue will be the Conference Centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin. The following authorities will cooperate with the UN to organize this conference: - the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; - the Ministry of Internal Affairs; - the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy, Frankfurt am Main; - the association of survey administrations of the German states; - the Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN).

In conjunction with the 8<sup>th</sup> UN Conference the following events will be organized: - the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names; - a technical exhibition; - technical excursions; - and a toponymic training course for executive officers in toponymy from developing countries.

### Report of South Africa

submitted by Lucie A. Moeller

40. United Nations Training Workshop in Namibia - From 14 to 19 April 1998 Peter E. Raper and Lucie A. Moeller presented a United Nations Training Workshop on Geographical Names in Windhoek at the invitation of the Government of Namibia. It was held at the Rössing Foundation Educational Centre and attended by some thirty-two participants from 13 regions of Namibia. Sponsored by UNESCO, the aim of the workshop was to facilitate the establishment of a national geographical names authority for Namibia, and to give guidelines on research methods, digital database development and compilation of a dictionary of Namibian place names.
41. Visit by Dignitaries from Mozambique - At the request of the Government of Mozambique a special meeting with members of the National Place Names Committee was held on 6 and 7 July 1998. Two officials from Mozambique were briefed on UN resolutions on the establishment of a national geographical names authority, namely Mr Luis Abrahamo, Mozambique's expert to the UNGEGN and Head of the Cartography Division of the National Directorate of Geography and Cadastre, and Mr Alexandre Uisse Chidimatembue, Head of the Department of Aerial Photography and Cartography of the same Department. The Report on the South African Geographical Names Commission served as basis for discussion. The meeting was chaired by Dr Peter E. Raper. Dr Lucie A. Moeller participated in the meeting as Secretary of the Africa South Division, and at the express request of the Government of Mozambique.
42. United Nations Training Courses on Geographical Names - The seventh United Nations Training Course on Geographical Names was held in Pretoria from 20 to 25 July 1998. Arranged jointly by the UNGEGN, the Geography Department of the University of Pretoria and the Names Research Institute, the course was attended by some 38 participants from Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. A one day fieldwork trip was organized to coincide with a technical visit to the Topocadastral Information Services of the City Council of Pretoria.
43. The South African Geographical Names Council - On the recommendations of the South African Working Forum on Geographical Names, the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology by Act 118 of 1998 established the South African Geographical Names Council. This Council has the task of standardising the geographical names of South Africa as recommended by resolution 4 of the First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.



44. XXth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences - The XXth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, held from 20 to 25 September 1999 in Santiago de Compostella, Spain, was attended by five South Africans, namely Professors A. Koopman, B.A. Meiring, S.J. Neethling, Dr C. Hromnik and Dr Peter E. Raper. For the first time a session was devoted to the standardisation of geographical name. Nine experts to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names participated in this session.

45. International Seminar in Korea - Dr Peter E. Raper and Dr Lucie A. Moeller were invited by the UNGEGN expert of Korea, professor Ki-Suk Lee, to participate in the "Fifth International Seminar on the Naming of Seas". The seminar was held in Seoul, Korea, from 25 to 27 October 1999. It focused on the international standardization of geographical names with specific emphasis on the naming of seas such as the East Sea and Sea of Japan. The paper read by Dr Raper was entitled "Names of Seas and Oceans: the United Nations Perspective", and Dr Moeller discussed "Progress on Naming Issues in South Africa: Who looks out to sea?". Papers were also presented by academics and cartographers from China, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States of America.