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Geographical Names**

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EXONYMS

Report of Norden Division

TWENTIETH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP
OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

NEW YORK 17 – 28 JANUARY 2000

INFORMATION PAPER
SUBMITTED BY NORDEN DIVISION

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A conference entitled *Utanlandske namn i Norden/Foreign names in Norden* was held in Oslo, Norway, 28–30 May 1997. The conference was prepared on the initiative of the Norden Division of UNGEGN, in cooperation with the Nordic Committee for Name Research (NORNA) and the Nordic Language Council, with Botolv Helleland and Leif Nilsson acting as the organizing committee. The proceedings of the conference, edited by Botolv Helleland, are now in print and will appear in March 2000 as volume 68 of the NORNA-rapporter.

About 50 persons from the five Nordic countries attended, in addition to one participant from Estonia. Altogether 22 papers were read, of which 18 are being published in the forthcoming volume. Three of these are written in English, the rest in Scandinavian languages, but with extensive abstracts in English.

The title "Foreign names" represents many aspects, such as linguistic, historical, geographical and sociological aspects. Several of these aspects were discussed at the conference although the main stress was laid upon the problems concerning the use of exonyms – endonyms. Clearly the views differ as to the use of foreign geographical names, and from an UNGEGN position it was perhaps unexpected that some of the speakers strongly argued in favour of keeping up the number of exonyms at the cost of endonyms. The main argument was that using exonyms made it easier for the individuals in each country to read and write the names. Others supported the United Nations resolutions on this topic by referring to the increasing international contact and need of consistent use of place-names.

The titles of the printed paper follows below in one of the Nordic languages and in English.

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Utanlandske namn i Norden/Foreign names in Norden

ed. Botolv Helleland

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