

**Twenty-second Session  
New York, 20-29 April 2004**

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**Item 7 of the Provisional agenda**

**SUMMARY REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS**

**Report of Working Group on Exonyms\***

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**\* Prepared by Milan Orožen Adamić, Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms**

## Report of Working Group on Exonyms

The initial proposal for this working group was made in October 2001 in Berchtesgaden and the first meeting was held in Berlin, September 6, 2002, based on the 4<sup>th</sup> resolution of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

The first and most important meeting after establishment of the Working Group was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting held in Prague, September 24-26, 2003.

The Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre hosted this meeting in collaboration with the Czech Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. In keeping with resolution 5 of the Eighth Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Working Group met in conjunction with the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the East, Central and South-East Europe Division of UNGEGN. Our thanks are expressed to Mr. Pavel Bohác for his excellent organization of these two events.

Currently the Working Group has 22 members from 15 countries and the elected convener is Milan Orožen Adamič (Slovenia, milan@zrc-sazu.si). At the second meeting in Prague, there were 14 members participating from 11 countries and 12 observers from 3 additional countries.

The main theme of the meeting in Prague was:

Many national authorities and experts are dealing with different kinds of geographical names; collecting and maintaining geographical names data. With regard to avoiding more than one name for one feature, exonyms still cause problems in both national and international communication. The meeting aimed to focus on:

- Criteria for the terminological division of exonyms;
- Criteria for the use of exonyms;
- Differences in the usage of exonyms depending on the level of communication;
- Methodological criteria used for the preparation of national lists of exonyms.

Many interesting papers were presented and the following objectives were underlined:

- Clarify definitions of relevant terminology  
*Action:* Recommend possible revised definitions to the Working Group on Terminology, to eliminate overlap and ambiguity
- Provide guidance on production of lists of exonyms (as noted in UN Resolutions), and underline the importance of the use of standardized endonyms  
*Action:* Create a template for national lists of exonyms, taking into account the format of existing national lists
- Develop advice on use of exonyms  
*Actions:* - Identify categories of exonyms, and the scope of their application (Resolution II-/28)  
- Support the creation of a geographical names database (as envisioned by the UN Statistics Division) through the provision of exonyms, as an adjunct to the endonym
- Test the efficacy of existing UN Resolutions on exonyms  
*Action:* Examine Resolutions and consider drafting a new Resolution

IN ADDITION, THE FOLLOWING POINTS WERE DISCUSSED:

- The need for a work plan for the Working Group
- The usefulness of a Working Group website and on-line discussion forum.

Members of the East, Central and South-East Europe Division included information on exonyms in their country reports.

One of the ideas, also discussed in Prague, was to publish a book on exonyms. Key papers were already presented there. First it was planned to find a publisher and enough money for printing in Slovenia - but unfortunately this was not successful.

In January the convenor was in Vienna and met with Dr. Peter Jordan. Among other questions and discussions, a book on exonyms was the central one. Later Dr. Jordan confirmed the intention to publish a volume on exonyms in a book series "Wiener Osteuropastudien". This will be without cost for the Working Group and the contributors. The book would be published early in 2005. As we have already agreed upon, papers from Prague will be published and it would also be advisable to wait for interesting papers presented at the UNGEGN session in New York in April 2004.

*Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms*

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## The UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms - List of Members

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