MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON EXONYMS

Report of the Working Group on Exonyms*

* Prepared by Milan Orožen Adamic, Convenor, Working Group on Exonyms
The Working Group was established in Berlin (6 September 2002), based on the 4th resolution of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. The first constitutional meeting of the Working Group was held in Berlin. The most important meeting after establishment of the Working Group was the 2nd Meeting of the Working Group 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 17th 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.

Great thanks were addressed to the Czech Office of Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre and Czech Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic for hospitality and outstanding organization of the meeting.

Participants (for details see Appendix 3).

**Working Group Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Bohác, Pavel</td>
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<td>Jordan, Peter</td>
<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Kerfoot, Helen</td>
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<td>Kladnik, Drago</td>
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<td>Makridis, Georgios</td>
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<td>Orožen Adamic, Milan</td>
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<td>Páll, Peeter</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>Pokoly, Béla</td>
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<td>Madagascar</td>
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<td>Syvak, Nina</td>
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<td>Woodman, Paul</td>
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**Observers**

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Christodoulou, Menelaos</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
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<td>Delagrammatika, Anna</td>
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<td>Gounaris, Emmanouil</td>
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<td>Harvalík, Milan</td>
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<td>Švehlová, Irena</td>
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<td>Vasileiou, Prodromos</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
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<td>Vasilatou, Regina</td>
<td>Greece</td>
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After extensive work (see Appendix 1: Programme of the meeting and Appendix 2: List of papers presented) and fruitful discussion, the following can be reported.

1. The convenor opened the session. Mrs Kerfoot presented a paper detailing the text of UN Resolutions pertinent to exonyms. This included a Resolution at the 8th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) establishing the UN Working Group on Exonyms.

2. Mr Woodman presented a paper that considered the overlap present in the current UN glossary between the definitions of endonym and exonym. The Working Group members agreed that further work needed to be undertaken, centring on the words ‘official’, ‘well-established’ and ‘indigenous’. Mr Woodman offered to coordinate further discussion on the subject and it was agreed that a proposal would be submitted to the UN Working Group on Toponymic Terminology.

3. Mr Woodman also recalled the unhappy relationship between UNGEGN and exonyms, and recommended that the establishment of the Working Group presented an ideal opportunity to take a fresh look at the subject. There was discussion as to whether exonyms impeded or aided international communication.

4. Mr Jordan gave a thorough account of all the criteria for the use of exonyms, and underlined the political sensitivity of exonym use.

5. Mr Päll presented a paper demonstrating that the application of a currently valid romanization system did not produce an exonym. This observation meant that it may prove necessary to supplement the categories of toponyms which should not be included in lists of exonyms, as noted in Resolution III/19.

6. Mr Harvalík presented a paper concerning a linguistic view of the boundaries between exonyms and endonyms. The question of pronunciation versus written names was considered beyond the scope of this Working Group.

7. Mr Woodman presented a paper outlining the place of exonyms in today’s toponymy, highlighting their relevance whilst noting their sensitivity and at the same time underlining that in international cartography it is usually official endonyms, rather than exonyms, which will provide the toponyms of choice. The Working Group discussed the natural life-cycle of exonyms and whether misspellings constituted exonyms. It was generally agreed that exonyms were a useful reference nationally.

8. Mr Orožen Adamic presented his paper on the treatment of names in multilingual areas. He stressed the importance of co-operation between neighbouring countries in the establishment of geographical names, particularly in border areas.

9. In his paper Mr Boháč discussed the gradual disappearance of exonyms in the Czech Republic. He demonstrated that the knowledge of Czech exonyms appeared to be on the wane.
10. A paper compiled by Mr Kladnik presented a draft of how a list of exonyms might look. Mr Orožen Adamic outlined the background to the compilation of this paper and described the main problems encountered. The different categories elaborated in the paper were discussed by the Working Group.

11. Mrs Kerfoot informed the Working Group of an initial concept for a UN Statistics Division database of geographical names, which was to be linked to an interactive map. The Working Group supported the inclusion of data fields for exonyms as an adjunct to the endonym and would discuss the details with the UN Secretariat.

12. Ms Ratovoarison presented a paper outlining the use of exonyms in Madagascar.

13. Ms Syvak reported on activities regarding exonyms in Ukraine, focussing on different language forms of names, and the definition of endonym and exonym.

14. The Working Group discussed its future work plan and the formulation of the terms of reference of the group. The objectives and appropriate action items as identified by the Working Group are attached.

15. The members examined a draft of a website for the Working Group. It would be hosted on the server of the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovene Academy of Science <www.zrc-sazu.si>, and edited by UK members of the Working Group. The members would provide comments on the proposed content to the Convenor.

16. The Working Group examined the list of current Working Group members.

17. The next meeting of the Working Group would be held during the 22nd Session of UNGEGN, New York, 20-29 April 2004. Mr Makridis offered to host a future Working Group meeting in Athens.

18. The Convenor and Mr Jordan would prepare a paper on the Working Group to be included in the forthcoming UNGEGN Information Bulletin.

19. A report for presentation to the next UNGEGN session would also be compiled.

20. The meeting was closed with thanks to the Convenor and to the Czech hosts.

Some areas for action were identified for the following objectives:

- Clarify definitions of relevant terminology
  Action: Recommend possible revised definitions to the Working Group on Terminology to eliminate overlap-ambiguity

- Provide guidance on production of lists of exonyms (as noted in UN Resolutions), and underline the importance of the use of standardised 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
Action- Identify categories of exonyms, and the scope of their application (Resolution II/28)
Support the creation of UN Statistics Division geographical names database 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 the drafting of a new Resolution

In January the convenor met in Vienna with Dr. Peter Jordan. Among other questions and discussions, the book on exonyms was the central one. Later Dr. Jordan confirmed the intention to publish in Austria 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, papers from Prague will be published and it would also be possible to incorporate interesting papers presented at the UNGEGN session in New York in April 2004. Until now not a great deal on exonyms has been published, but on the other hand a lot of discussion has taken place on the topic. The establishment of the Working Group is the opportunity to take a fresh look at exonyms - and perhaps to consider them in a more favourable light - has surely arrived. Of all the subjects discussed under our UNGEGN agendas, the subject of exonyms is one of the most significant since it is probably the most apparent - and the most contentious - to the general audience, as was underlined by Paul Woodman.

The first idea for a title for the book “About Exonyms” was proposed by the Convenor. With an email circular (12 February) all Working Group members were informed about the idea for the book. Jordan later discussed the title and proposed: "Exonyms and the International Standardisation of Geographical Names"; subtitle: "Approaches towards the Suspension of a Seeming Contradiction". He admits that the subtitle has a certain bias and might not be agreeable for all members of the Working Group. Then the title could also be left alone.

However the important task in New York will be discussion about the book, its concept, and the collection of papers to be published.

Appendixes:

Appendix 1: Joint International Meeting on Geographical Names


General Program

24th September, Wednesday
Joint meeting
8.00 – 9.00 Registration of the delegates
9.00 – 9.30 Opening of the meeting (Item 1 of the agenda)
Oldřich Pašek, Vice-President of the Czech Office for Surveying Mapping and Cadastre;
Karel Oliva, Director of the Czech Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic;
Helen Kerfoot, Chair-person of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
Milan Orožen Štamic, Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms;
9.30 – 10.30 Session I (Items 2 – 4 of the agenda)
10.30 – 10.50 Coffee break
10.50 – 12.30 Session II (Items 4 – 5 of the agenda)
12.30 – 13.30 Lunch break
13.30 – 15.30 Session III (Items 6 – 9 of the agenda)
15.30 – 15.50 Coffee break
15.50 – 17.30 Session IV (Items 11 – 15 of the agenda)

25th September, Thursday
Joint Guided Visit to the National Library, Prague
9.00 – 11.00

Joint meeting
13.30 – 15.30 Session V (Item 10 of the agenda)
15.30 – 15.50 Coffee break
15.50 – 17.30 Session V (continued) (Item 10 of the agenda)

26th September, Friday
Separate meetings
9.00 – 10.45 Session report – discussion (Item 16 of the agenda)
10.45 – 11.45 Coffee break
11.45 – 14.00 Session report – discussion and acceptance

Joint meeting
14.00 Closing the meeting
Jiří Cernohorský, Director of the Land Survey Office
Appendix 2: List of papers presented in Working Group on Exonyms in Praha

1. TEXTS OF RESOLUTIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF EXONYMS  
   Helen Kerfoot, Canada

2. THE UNGEGN DEFINITIONS OF “ENDONYM” AND “EXONYM”  
   Paul Woodman, United Kingdom

3. EXONYMS AND UNGEGN: AN UNHAPPY HISTORY  
   Paul Woodman, United Kingdom

4. CRITERIA FOR THE USE OF EXONYMS  
   Peter Jordan, Austria

5. ENDONYMS/EXONYMS AND WRITING SYSTEMS  
   Peeter Päll, Estonia

6. ENDONYMS VS. EXONYMS A LINGUISTIC VIEW OF THE DETERMINATION OF THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THEM  
   Milan Harvalik, Czech Republic

7. EXONYMS: A STRUCTURAL CLASSIFICATION AND A FRESH APPROACH  
   Paul Woodman, United Kingdom

8. TREATMENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN MULTILINGUAL AREAS  
   Milan Orožen Adamic, Slovenia

9. PAPER ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF EXONYM  
   Pavel Bohác, Czech Republic

10. TYPES OF EXONYMS IN SLOVENE LANGUAGE  
    Drago Kladnik, Milan Orožen Adamic, Slovenia

11. THE UNGEGN WORKING GROUP ON EXONYMS - LIST OF MEMBERS  
    Convener, Milan Orožen Adamic, Slovenia

12. LIST OF SELECTIVE EXONYMS IN UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE FOR THE TERRITORY OF EUROPE
Appendix 3: List of participants of Joint Meeting on Geographical Names, Praha, 24 – 26 September 2003

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