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**UNITED NATIONS  
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**Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda:  
Activities relating to the Working Group on Toponymic  
Data Files and Gazetteers**

**Standardization of Geographical Names in the Republic of Korea**

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**Prepared by the Republic of Korea**

## **Standardization of Geographical Names in the Republic of Korea**

The National Geographic Information Institute(NGII) of the Republic of Korea has finished the process of standardizing almost 160,000 geographical names all over the country<sup>1</sup>. This task was carried out with the help of local and provincial committees on geographical names and finally approved by the Central Geographical Names Committee.

*The Guideline for Standardization of Geographical Names*, produced by the NGII, includes the following major principles for standardization.

- Those geographical names should be adopted over others if they are widely used by majority of people, easy to pronounce and write, from a concrete historical background and the legacy of forefathers, and conform to modern standard Korean language.
- Those geographic names which were used only temporarily, such as during the Japanese occupation , are derogatory or lack a proper origin of words, should be abolished.
- Current names should be maintained unless they fall under the conditions for abolishment.
- One geographical name should be used for one geographical feature: Different names including Chinese characters may be used in parentheses if necessary.
- Geographical names established by laws or rules enacted by the National Assembly or by presidential decree should be higher priority in adoption.

Standardized geographical names with marine geographical names are marked in the official maps produced by NGII. More importantly, they have fixed status in the database of geographical names and have been digitally maintained and serviced on the

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<sup>1</sup> A progress paper was reported at the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of UNGEGN, New York, 20-29 April 2004(Working Paper No.86).

web by NGII since 2000. Recently, the currently used database structure was analyzed and a new improved framework has been suggested. Standardized geographical names are also posted in the government bulletin produced by the Ministry of Government Affairs and Home Affairs.

These standardized geographical names are not final. The requests of local residents regarding additional designation or a name change of a specific area will be taken into account and reported through the relevant procedures for naming of geographical sites.

[THE END]