

**Twenty-fifth session
Nairobi, 5–12 May 2009**

Item 9 of the provisional agenda

Activities relating to the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

**Report of the Convenor of the Working Group on Training Courses
in Toponymy 2007-2009^{*}**

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Summary of the report:

1. The UNGEGN-sponsored international training courses held since the 9th UNCSGN, in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso, 2008), Timisoara (Romania 2008), and Nairobi (Kenya, 2009) and the 2 PAIGH training courses held since 2007, and in Quito (Ecuador, 2008) are described, and the international training courses currently planned (for Turkey, Kuwait and Western Africa) are mentioned.

Although it cannot be complete, the national training events held that came to the attention of the convenor are listed as well. The report continues with a description of the training material produced for future toponymy courses, produced for UNGEGN. The report ends with the composition of the working group.

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International Training Courses held

2. UNGEGN stimulates the organisation of training courses in toponymy in order to increase awareness of the need for geographical names standardization and, more specifically, to help fill the need for qualified personnel. The general model of such courses is a two-week programme of lectures, alternated by exercises and fieldwork, and completed by instruction in digital processing techniques. As since 1982 at least one such a course, meant for an international audience, has been held each year, a suitable collection of lecture notes, manuals, fieldwork guides, etc has been built up, from which prospective lecturers might draw their inspiration. Due to participation of a different audience (directors of NMCAs) or to a more restricted timeframe (a few days available prior to an UNGEGN meeting or session) in 2008 and 2009 short-term courses were given that could not cover all aspects of names collecting, processing and database/gazetteer building.

3. Since the twenty-fourth session of UNGEGN the convenor has been informed about international training courses or workshops in toponymy held in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso, 2008), Quito (Ecuador, 2008), Timisoara (Romania, 2008) and Nairobi (Kenya, 2009).

4. The 20th PAIGH course in Applied Toponymy, sponsored by the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, with a training team directed by Roger Payne, Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names, was held in Quito, Ecuador, March-April 2008.

The first UN Toponymy Course for West Africa was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, August 4-8, 2008. It was aimed at directors of national mapping agencies in West Africa, and had as objectives to show the complexity of geographical names processing, to demonstrate the needs for standardisation and to make participants aware of the importance of national name committees. The course was locally organised by the Institut Geographique de Burkina, directed by Mr Tapsoba, and financed by the African Organisation for Cartography and Remote Sensing. The 30 participants came from 7 West-African countries. The lecturers were from Algeria, Burkina, Canada, France and the Netherlands. During a short fieldwork participants were able to grasp the problems inherent in collecting names information.

A UN Toponymy Course for Eastern Europe was held in conjunction with the Toponymy Week, organised by Peter Jordan and Remus Cretan, at West University in Timisoara, Romania, from 8-12 September 2008, allowing various UNGEGN working groups to meet individually and jointly. The 3-day course, held September 6-8, had lecturers from Austria, Canada, Germany, Netherlands and Romania, and was given for 11 participants from Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine. The lecture team was assisted by experts from the Military Topographic Directorate. There was special interest, in this multicultural part of Romania, for name standardisation as part of preserving the cultural heritage of the various groups of inhabitants. An excursion was made in order to highlight this aspect.

The second UN Toponymy course for East Africa was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from May 1-3,

2009. The course was organised by Mr Anwar Siala, SG of the African Organisation for Cartography and Remote Sensing and the UNGEGN Africa Task Force chair Brahim Atoui.

International training courses planned

5. The Board of Experts for Geographical Names of Turkey is planning to organise a toponymy course, together with the national mapping agency, for the near future. A toponymy course in Western Africa, in conjunction with the Division Francophone, possibly to be held in Conakry, is currently under discussion. There are also plans for having a new toponymy course in Angola, to be organized by the Portuguese-speaking division.

National training events held

6. Every other year, a Course entitled "Introduction à la gestion toponymique" has been held at the Geography Department of Laval University (Québec, Canada). It has been held with the collaboration of the Commission de toponymie du Québec (professor : Henri Dorion)

7. From November 26 to 28, 2008, the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE) organized a three-day event, including a seminar and workshop on toponymic and environmental issues. Forty-eight staff at the IBGE offices in Rio de Janeiro and individuals working in regional institutions in Brazil participated in this activity, supported by a Canada-Brazil partnership through the National Geospatial Framework Project (PIGN). The event was organized by Ana Maria Goulart Bustamante and Vania de Oliveira Nagem with presentations from Moema José de Carvalho Augusto and other in-house speakers, as well as input from Professor Maria Vicentina de Paula Amaral Dick, a well known and highly respected professor and researcher in indigenous toponymy, based at the University of São Paulo, and Helen Kerfoot, Chair of UNGEGN.

The three days saw lively discussion on many aspects of national geographical names standardization, with a particular focus on terminology, gazetteers, the Toponymic Atlas of Brazil, indigenous toponymy, documentation available in Portuguese, and the new mapping of the Rebio União (a biological reserve) with new geodetic control (based on the new national datum SIRGAS2000) and recently collected geographical names. One afternoon was assigned to field work, when two groups investigated local toponyms in the urban environment of Rio de Janeiro - one visiting a central historical district, the other a coastal area near the well known Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf). Both groups reported back on the local toponymy and an interesting discussion arose on the selection of an appropriate location to use for assigning coordinates for the city.

The training was timed immediately before the Third Statistical Conference of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) in Rio in early December. One of the three days of the Conference was scheduled to discuss issues of geographical naming and for the Second meeting of the Portuguese-speaking Division of UNGEGN.

Training material

8. Currently, two training courses on the web are gradually being extended, a French-speaking course, to be found at <http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/Formation/index.htm> , developed by Elisabeth Calvarin (Institut géographique national, Paris) and Henri Dorion , and an English-speaking course developed by the International Cartographic Association, to be found at <http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet/>. The latter course has been extended by a chapter on script conversion produced by Noline McCarthy.

The first toponymy textbook in the Indonesian language (titled *Toponimi Indonesia*) was published in 2008 in Indonesia at the occasion of the 80th birthday of Dr Jacob Rais.

9. In 2007, a special issue (volume 39) of the onomastical journal *Onoma* was published, edited by Botolv Helleland, with as its theme onomastical research and training. It contained the following educational contributions:

HELLELAND, Botolv - Name Research and Teaching. Some Introductory Approaches

NICOLAISEN, W.F.H. - Teaching Names. A Personal Account

PITKÄNEN, Ritva Liisa - Onomastic Research and Teaching in Finland

SMITH, Grant - Teaching Onomastics in the United States

CAFFARELLI, Enzo - On the Choice and Use of Onomastic Sources in Teaching as a Method for an Interdisciplinary Approach

GERMAIN, Jean - L'enseignement de l'onomastique en Belgique francophone

DORION, Henri - Toponymie et enseignement. Quelques réflexions pratiques

HENGST, Karlheinz - Schola Onomastica Lipsiensis. Die onomastische Lehre und ihre Entwicklung in Leipzig

HACKL, Stefan - Anregungen zu einer zeitgemäßen onomastischen Hochschuldidaktik
Ein Modellversuch an der Universität Regensburg

ŠRÁMEK, Rudolf - Lehrprogramm *Namenkunde* an der Masaryk-Universität in Brno (Tschechien)

FRANK, Rainer - Project *Namenkunde*. Erstellen und Auswerten kleinerer Datenbanken

STANI-FERTL, Roman – Geographieunterricht. Unbewusst verwendete geographische Namen als didaktisches Instrument

ALHAUG, Gulbrand - Teaching of Anthroponymy. A Norwegian Contribution

NYSTRÖM, Staffan - *Torp*-names in Östergötland. A Pedagogical Experiment

SÆRHEIM, Inge - Toponymy and Teaching. Cultural History and Cultural Experience

SANDNES, Berit, GAMMELTOFT, Peder - Place-names as a Constituent in a non-onomastic Course

ORMELING, Ferjan - Teaching Toponymy through the Web

KADMON, Naftali - Teaching Toponymy at University Level: Geographical Names, Maps and GIS

KERFOOT, Helen - United Nations and Geographical Names Standardization. Some Educational Aspects of the Programme.

A number of these contributions have now been incorporated on the UNGEGN website
(http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/othermaterials_Onoma%20Vol39.htm)

Working group composition

10. The UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy during the 2002-2007 term consisted of:

Mr. B. Atoui
Mme. Elisabeth Calvarin
Mr. H. Dorion
Ms. F. Hodges
Ms. H. Kerfoot
Ms. L. Möller
Mr. F. J. Ormeling (convenor)
Mr. R. Payne
Mr. P. Raper
Mr. P-G. Zaccheddu