

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

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Reports of the divisions

Report of the Asia, South-East and the Pacific South-West Division *

* Prepared by R.W. Matindas (Indonesia), Chair, Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division.

**Report of the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division
United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

The 15th Divisional Meeting was held in Jakarta, Indonesia on the 24th November 2008, followed a meeting of the Indonesian National Team for Standardization of Topographical Names, on the 25th November 2009.

Summary of the Meeting

- I. The Meeting was attended by the following member countries and number of delegates in brackets: Brunei Darussalam (3), Indonesia (16, incl. observers), Malaysia (4) and Singapore (1); a total of 24 participants. Australia and New Zealand sent their apologies for not attending the Meeting but submitted a written report.

Each country presented the respective national report, as follows:

Australia:

- ***Specific projects of interest:***
 1. Education Package: The Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia (CGNA) is committed to the ongoing promotion of its educational package on place names, also request to Geoscience Australia to include a hyperlink in the first search page of the National Gazetteer to the CGNA Educational Package
 2. Review of Guidelines: CGNA is currently undertaking a major review of its Consistent Use of Place name Guidelines. It is expected that this review will be completed and endorsed at the next full meeting of CGNA. A new guidelines also reviewed and endorsed on the use of abbreviations in place and road names
 3. Dual naming as means of recognizing place names from the various cultures in the respective countries were continued
 4. Community Domain Names System
 5. The developing of AS/NZ training module for CGNA jurisdictions is considered.

- ***Supporting for UNGEGN***
 1. Divisional Gazetteer and Map: Gazetteer and Regional Map of Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division was progressed well and to be continued.
 2. UNGEGN Meeting: The 17th UNGEGN Divisional Meeting will take place in Sydney 2010 coinciding with the FIG, and the UNGEGN Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division Chair will be invited to host this meeting. In principal Australia supporting the next UNGEGN Session and Conference in 2011 and 2012.

New Zealand:

- ***New act:*** The New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, a New Zealand's national names authority, has new legislation, the 'New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008', was enacted on 22th May 2008.
- ***Treaty Settlement:*** The government expects a substantial increase in the number of settlements for Treaty grievances by Māori over the next few years.

Malaysia:

- Malaysian National Committee on Geographical Names (MNCNGN) was established on the 11th September 2002, with its members consisted of representatives from Federal Agencies and State Government. To assist the MNCNGN, a Technical Committee and three Working Groups were formed.

MNCNGN goals and programmes are:

- Guidelines for determination of geographical names. The guidelines have been distributed to all members for their use since 2005, which in the Malaysian Standard format has commented by public and presented to the Industry Standard Committee for IT Telecommunication and Multimedia during its meeting on the 30th October 2008
 - MNCNGN website called "My GeoName" was launched in July 2006. All information related to geographic naming activities can be accessed at <http://www.jupem.gov.my/geonames>. Another relevant website on geonaming is at <http://www.mygeoportal.gov.my>, developed by Malaysian Center for Geospatial Data Infrastructure (MaCGDI)
 - Geographical names database and production of web gazetteer. This geographical names database is the data bank storing for local names, location, historical background and gazette notification that have authoritative records available for government and public use
 - Naming of island and off-shore geographical entities
 - Workshop and briefing were conducted to disseminate information on the guidelines and to gather input for geographical names database design.
- Issues encountered in developing and implementing the standardized usage of geographical names throughout the country, such as follows: verification of geographical names, displaying coordinates on web gazetteer, Romanization system for other names, pronunciation for geographical names in the web gazetteer, and new spelling for geographical names.

Indonesia:

- The Government of Indonesia finally established a national geographical names authority, enacted through a Presidential Regulation No.112/2006 on 29 December 2006. It is called the National Team for Standardization of Topographical Names. In the effort to introduce the existence of this institution some of the activities, implemented nationally, among others: a). socialization of national names authority, 2). Guidelines and procedures for standardization of geographical names, and 3). Integration of geographical names data into national and regional spatial data

infrastructure. This effort in line with Resolution No. VIII/6 adopted at the 8th UNCSGN to integrate geographical names database into NSDI.

- Other activity to support the work of this body, six working group were established, namely: a). working group on drafting guidelines, b). working group on naming maritime features, c). working group on undersea features, d). working group on terrestrial features, e). working group on data files and gazetteer, and f). working group on training
- In the frame work of decentralization of government functions, according to Decentralization Law No.32/2004: The function of the standardization of geographical names, will also be developed to provinces and kabupatens (the second level of provincial government), and hence, committees for the standardization of geographical names will be established at the respective provinces and kabupatens.
- Indonesia has recently publish a map that shows distribution of population over the entire archipelago, and also publish the principles, policies, and procedures to standardize topographical/geographical names in English version.

Brunei Darussalam:

- The delegate of Brunei Darussalam introduced brief the history of national geographical names authority, which was established on the 5th June 1976, by the name of **Jawatankuasa Nama-nama Ilmu Alam**. On the 2nd August 2006 the names was changed to **Jawatankuasa Kebangsaan Nama Geografi** (JKNG) was chaired by the Director of Language and Literature Bureau.
- The authority and main function of JKNG were to approve geographical names nationwide, new names proposed must be endorsed by the committee before its made official (gazetted), to ensure physically and to correct spelling of geographical names
- The JKNG website (<http://www.survey.gov.bn/jkng>) was launched by the Honourable Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, on the 3rd August 2008.

Singapore:

- Singapore did not present report, as there is no activity by its UNGEEN Committee this year.

Thailand:

- Thai National Committee on Geographical Names (TNCG).
The TNCG was established on 4 August 1992, by the Thai Cabinet. This committee is chaired by the Director of Royal Thai Survey Department (RTSD), with 21 members from related government agencies. The responsibility of TNCG are as follows: a). to standardize geographical names to be used as national standard; b). naming the natural features which still remain unnamed or discrepant; c). determining policies, principles, and procedures for naming endonyms, exonyms, under water environmental or sea surface features; d). Appointing sub-committee, working group and experts to assist the TNCG; e). Planning and using the GIS to produce a gazetteer and related publications to meet the international standard, and

f). Cooperating and coordinating with UN related to geographical names and to implement UNCSGN resolutions.

The TNCG has appointed two National Sub-Committees on Geographical Names Standardization, mainly: a). National Sub-Committees on Geographical Names Standardization comprised 20 members from relevant government agencies. The main responsibility is to standardize geographical names, and b). National Sub-Committees on Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors comprised 12 representatives from related government agencies. This sub-committee responsible for considering, planning and producing the Toponymic Guidelines for Maps and Other Editors.

- The effort to apply particular UNCSGN resolutions, TNCG conducted some activities, covers:
 - a. Standardization of feature/geographical names over the country which approved by Thai Cabinet;
 - b. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors
 - c. Gazetteer of Thailand was formulated by Royal Thai Survey Department, and now available on website <http://www.royin.go.th> .

Issues brought up at the Meeting

1. Regional Gazetteer and Map Project

- The meeting noted with appreciation the work done by Australia in producing the draft of a new edition of The Regional Map
- The naming recommendation affecting indigenous minority and regional language groups geographical names and were agreed to leave it to the respective countries to manage on their own.
- The meeting also discussed on the densed display of text on the map. Indonesia suggested three scales of map sizes as the maps are digital in format. Also explored whether it is feasible to depict only cities with population more than 100,000 to avoid the clustering of data.
- The regional map should not be the authority on boundaries, and also this disclaimer should be inserted on the map
- Updating of regional map:
 - The present regional map should be completed first before embarking on new map project at different scales, and in undertaking this effort should also take into account of the availability of global map with a scale of 1,000,000 as a reference
 - Standardized geographical names to be used
 - Data should be distributed through the respective National Board on Geographical Names Authority of each participating country.

2. Generic terms across the languages of the region (Action/Resolution 1 from 12th Divisional meeting in Brunei Darussalam 2005 was proposed by APIT)

- this project will be continued
- Indonesia will continue leading the effort

3. **UNGEGN Toponymic Training Course** (Action/Resolution 4 from 12th Divisional Meeting in Brunei Darussalam 2005)
 - Indonesia informed her readiness to accommodate this and to be a toponymic training centre.
 - The meeting agreed for Indonesia to submit a proposal.
4. **Preparation to the forthcoming 25th UNGEGN Session in Nairobi, 5 – 12 May 2009**
 - A standard template will be used for reporting actions undertaken by member countries in regards to UNCSGN resolutions and the work of UNGEGN working groups.
 - Divisional report will be prepared based on the feedback from member countries.
5. **Date and venue of the next meeting**

It was agreed the next meeting of the Division be held in Nairobi (5-12 May 2009), to be followed by Bali Meeting (4 August 2009) concurrently with the 10th South East Asia Survey Congress (SEASC), and in conjunction with the International Symposium on Geographical Names (5 August 2009).

I. The absence of the Pacific South-West Countries in the Divisional Meetings

Since the establishment of this Division, except New Zealand and Australia the other countries in the Pacific South-West, such as, Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Samoa, Palau, Salomon Island, Tonga, and Nauru, never attend the Divisional Meetings, even though proper invitation through diplomatic channel had been sent. The importance of these countries to participate is related to the linguistic point of view.

We would highly appreciate if UNGEGN would sought ways to approach those countries to be present at such international meetings for their contribution to the objectives of the standardization of geographical names.

II. The absence of some Asia South-East Countries

The situation in Pacific South-West countries is also experienced by the absence of Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Philippine representatives. Lack of funding seem to be one of their constrains.