

**Twenty-sixth session
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Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda

Report of the divisions

Report of the China Division *

Submitted by China

*Prepared by Liu Baoquan, director, China Institute of Toponymy

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Summary

China division has made progress in the geographical names database establishment, the geographical names culture protection, the standardization of geographical names in Antarctic and lunar names since the twenty-fifth session of the UNGEGN.

Implementing resolutions of United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names actively, China division has promoted the standardization of geographical names actively since the 25th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. Main Progresses are as follows:

1. Geographical Names Database

We are proceeding with the construction of geographical names database. Nowadays there are 23 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities), over 250 cities (prefectures, autonomous prefectures) and more than 1300 counties (districts) have their own geographical names database. The Chinese internet map service website “天地图” (mapworld, <http://www.tianditu.cn>) has launched officially. Over 10 million data of geographical names and addresses can be inquired through the website. With sustained progress of transforming geographical names from foreign languages into Chinese, a new generation database of foreign geographical names is under construction.

2. Research, Propaganda and Protection of Geographical Names Culture

We have finished 52 series of the maxi-series documentary TV play named *An Ancient County of Thousand Years' History*. We started to produce the play from 2005 to propagate the geographical names culture. The play has been broadcasted many rounds by many television stations (such as CCTV). We also granted protection indications of the geographical names cultural heritage to these counties. After negotiating with CCTV, we plan to make and broadcast more documentary TV plays on geographical names culture, such as *An Ancient City of Thousand Years' History*, *An Ancient Town of Thousand Years' History*. Uniting with the Palace Museum and China Culture Relics Protection Foundation, China Institute of Toponymy held an exhibition of choice pictures on cultural heritage of ancient counties of thousand years' history, to propagate the protection of names of ancient counties. Many cities promote the protection of geographical names cultural heritage through various ways. For example, a seminar on geographical names culture protection was held in Beijing. Experts offered a lot of constructive suggestions on the protection of the ancient geographical names in Beijing. Furthermore, a geographical names culture forum was held in Ji'nan, the capital of Shandong province. We called for the whole society to pay attention to the inhabitation and protection of the geographical names culture at the forum. The resolution IX/4 adopted by the ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names confirms the geographical names as intangible cultural heritage, and encourages the official bodies responsible for toponymy to prepare and implement a programme to safeguard and develop the heritage. The geographical names authorities throughout China strive to implement the resolution during the course of formulating the urban geographical names planning. Some cities formulate special plans on the protection of geographical names culture.

Many specific protective measures are given in these plans. For instance, relevant protective measures should be adopted to deal with old geographical names existing in different forms. The old geographical names should be maintained to the greatest extent during urban renewal. Monuments should be set up at where they were for the abandoned old geographical names that have far-reaching influences and rich cultural connotations. The historical evolution and cultural connotations of living old geographical names should be introduced to the public. These measures have promoted the urban cultural grade, and brought the geographical names culture construction into a new stage.

3. Progress Made in the Standardization of Geographical Names in Antarctic and Lunar Names

Monographic studies have been launched in the field of the standardization of geographical names in Antarctic and lunar names. As one of the first stage research results, the standard Chinese transformation of 468 lunar names have been published on the People's Daily in the form of announcement of Civil Affairs Ministry on 3rd September 2010. Three lunar names Cai Lun, Bi Sheng and Zhang Yuzhe, applied by Chinese scientists, have been approved by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) on 2nd August 2010. Approved by the state, the standard Chinese geographical names located in the area of scientific expedition of Chinese scientists in Antarctic will be published in the form of gazetteer.

4. The Geographical Names Publications

The editing and publishing of *China Geographical Names Standardization Study Series* have made progress. There are 3 books, *Introduction to the Geographical Names Investigation*, *Introduction to the digital Geographical Names* and *Introduction to the Standard Enacting on Geographical Names*, have been published in 2010, over 600 thousand Chinese characters altogether, Other books, such as *Study on the Work of Geographical Names in Antarctic of International Organizations* and *Selections of the Geographical Names Documents on Chinese Minority Linguistics* have been published also.