

**Twenty-eight session
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Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda

**Implementation of resolutions and activities relating to
the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation**

Implementing the UNCSGN Resolutions *

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Implementing the UNCSGN Resolutions[†]

SUMMARY

This paper aims to promote the interest of UNGEGN experts in the implementation of resolutions on the standardization of geographical names. As designated and recommended by the UNGEGN statute and several resolutions, the implementation of UN Conference resolutions is one of the primary 'tasks' and 'responsibilities' that UNGEGN should continue to pursue actively. An examination of the working papers submitted to previous conferences shows that there are three levels on which issues of the standardization of geographical names have been related to resolutions.

Premises

The statute of the UNGEGN stipulates the tasks of UNGEGN in implementing resolutions. It includes the following:

I. Aims

The basic aims of the Group of Experts are:

(f) To implement the tasks assigned as a result of the resolutions adopted at United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

III. Functions

Functions of the Group of Experts are:

2. ...to provide leadership in the implementation of resolutions adopted at the Conferences.

This status has been emphasized by several resolutions, including;

Resolution IV/24

The Conference recommends that the UNGEGN should continue to encourage the Geographical/Linguistic Divisions to be more active in implementing the decisions of the UNCSGN, as applicable, in working out reporting schedules on their activities to all States within their Divisions and to the UNGEGN.

Resolution V/4

The Conference recommends that the UNGEGN continue to pursue actively its responsibilities as defined in its statute and in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the present Conference; recommends also that a working group be established within the Group to review the resolutions adopted by the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names and report on their implementation;

[†] This working paper pertains to the UNCSGN resolutions V/4 (Work performed by the UNGEGN and its future activities), VI/4 (Working group on evaluation), IV/24 (Divisional activities) and V/2 (Statute of the UNGEGN).

Previous discussions

After the Working Group on Evaluation was established by resolution V/4 (1987), it conducted a survey on the resolutions and the results were reported at the 15th Session in 1991 by Richard R. Randall, then convenor, and Helen Kerfoot (WP.55). As it was a very comprehensive survey on the work of standardization, questions on resolutions included;

- ♦ extent to which UN resolutions have promoted standardization in the country (overall);
- ♦ value of resolutions (overall);
- ♦ most useful resolutions and how they are implemented;
- ♦ resolutions not of interest;
- ♦ resolutions in need of cancellation or revision;
- ♦ factors hindering the implementation of resolutions; and
- ♦ effectiveness of resolutions (comments)

From 29 responses (countries), it was difficult to summarize or reach statistically supported conclusions due to national variations, but a few recommendations were noted for consideration.

Another discussion was carried out in the meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation in 2008. A proposal was made to conduct a new survey to assess the extent of implementation and effectiveness of resolutions, in light of the previous one in 1991. A consensus was reached that, before conducting a further study on this topic, it would be more useful to develop a user-friendly web-structured access to resolutions, searchable by subject and key words. Subsequently, a database of resolutions was created and is now in operation in English and French.

At the latter discussion, a classification of resolutions was tried into substantive (i.e. dealing with methods of standardization, providing guidance to nations needing assistance on standardization programs), administrative (i.e. UNGEGN rules, regulations, procedures, classification of work, agenda considerations) and token (thanking individuals or host nations), as suggested by WP.55 of the 15th Session. When this classification scheme is applied, out of a total of 207 resolutions adopted up to the 10th Conference, the number of substantive ones is counted to be just less than one hundred. But when taking modifications or updates of previous ones into consideration, the actual number would decrease.

Working papers on implementing resolutions

Since the 8th Conference, the UNGEGN Chair and its Secretariat have reported on the actions taken on resolutions adopted at the previous conference (E/CONF.94/CRP.93; E/CONF.98/79; E/CONF.101/3). Actions for various substantive resolutions have been noted as the responsibility of working groups or individual member states.

Some working papers of member states have related their work to resolutions. Three levels of correlation can be identified.

- ♦ First, there are working papers which fully elaborate their actions by resolutions:

- working papers submitted by Austria (E/CONF.101/60) and New Zealand (E/CONF.101/50) at the 10th Conference,
 - by Finland (E/CONF.98/122) at the 9th Conference, and
 - by the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (E/CONF.79/INF/63), the Federal Republic of Germany (E/CONF.79/INF/27), the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (E/CONF.79/INF/36) and by Finland (E/CONF.79/L.69) at the 5th Conference.
- ◆ Second, some papers name resolutions on which their action was based, e.g. the working paper submitted by Indonesia (E/CONF.101/119) at the 10th Conference.
 - ◆ Third, there are also papers which make only general mention of resolutions.

Further orientation toward implementing resolutions

Comments and suggestions on how to make further progress on implementing resolutions are welcomed. Some procedural measures could be taken, e.g. requesting experts to mention resolution(s) to which the working paper is relevant, and conducting a survey on resolutions and taking a thorough review of them. Some substantive studies on resolutions will also be feasible when the methodology and scope of the study is set and agreed upon. The Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation plans to continuously encourage UNGEGN experts to relate their work to resolutions and report the results to subsequent meetings.