SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
London, 10-31 May 1972

Draft resolution submitted by the Arabic group[1]

Romanization of Arabic geographical names

The Conference,

Considering resolutions 11 and 12 of the 1967 Conference,

Noting the system adopted by the Arabic experts at the 1971 Beirut
Conference which is reproduced in the Appendix to document E/CONF.61/L.77,

Further noting the practical amendments carried out and agreed upon
by the representatives of the Arabic-speaking countries at their
conference,

Recommends the adoption of the amended Beirut system, as shown in
the annex to this resolution, for the Romanization of the geographical
names within those Arabic-speaking countries where this system is
officially acknowledged.

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[1] Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia

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LON.72-500

Examples.		Latin letters		Arabic letters
Arbīl	أربيل	A (see note 2)		ا
Banhā	بنها	B		ب
Tadmur	تدمر	T		ت
Tharthār Tharthār	ثرثار	Th Th		ث
Jabal	جبل	J		ج
Ḥimṣ Ḥimṣ	حمص	Ḥ Ḥ		ح
Khaybar Khaybar	خيبر	Kh Kh		خ
Dammām	دمام	D		د
Dhahbān Dhahbān	ذهبان	Dh Dh		ذ
Rafaḥ Rafaḥ	رفح	R		ر
Zabīd	زبيد	Z		ز
Sīnā’	سيناء	S		س
Shibīn Shibīn	شبين	Sh Sh		ش
Ṣafad Ṣafad	صفد	Ṣ Ṣ		ص
Ḍabʿah Ḍabʿah	ضبعه	Ḍ Ḍ		ض
Ṭanṭā Ṭanṭā	طنطا	Ṭ Ṭ		ط
Ẓahrān Ẓahrān	ظهران	Ẓh Ẓ		ظ
ʿAkkā ʿAkkā	عكا	ʿ		ع بالفتحة
ʿIrāq ʿIrāq	عراق	ʿ	ʿ	بالكسرة
ʿUmān ʿUmān	عمان	ʿ		بالضمة
Baʿlabak Baʿlabak	بعلبك	ʿ		عٍ بالسكون
Ghadīr Ghadīr	غدير	Gh Gh		غ
Fālūjah	فالوجه	F		ف
Qaṭar Qaṭar	قطر	Q		ق
Kūt	كوت	K		ك
Lībyā	ليبيا	L		ل
Miṣr Miṣr	مصر	M		م
Najd	نجد	N		ن
Hīt	هيت	H (see also note 3)		ه

Examples.	Latin letters	Arabic letters
Wahrān وهـران	W	و
Yemen يـمـن	Y	ى
وتوضع على الحروف المطلوبه في الوسط في آخر الكلمة مثل بئر ـ كربلاء	ٔ مـمـ (see note 1)	الهـمـزة
Bi'r Karbala'		

TRANSLITERATION OF THE ARABIC VOWELS, DIPHTHONGS, AND SPECIAL DIACRITICAL MARKS

Examples		Latin	Arabic
Al Basrah. Placed over consonant after which pronounced.	البصرة	a	◌َ
Ar Riyāḍ. Placed under consonant.	الرياض	i	◌ِ
Al Quds. Placed over consonant.	القدس	u	◌ُ
Bāb al Mandab. See note 2	باب المندب	ā	١ا
Al Madīnah	المدينة	ī	ي
Ṣūr	صور	ū	و
Marsá Maṭrūḥ	مرسى مطروح	á	ى
Placed over consonant.		omit	◌ْ
Ṣaydā	صيدا	ay	◌َيْ
Ad Dawḥah	الدوحة	aw	◌َوْ
See note 7.		a^n	◌ً
See note 7.		i^n	◌ٍ
See note 7.		u^n	◌ٌ
See note 8.		doubling	◌ّ
See note 9.		'	◌ٔ
Abū Muʻayṭ. See note 10.	آلبو معيط	a (initial)	آ
Qur'ān	قرآن	'a (medial)	آ

1. *Hamzah* is written in Arabic over all initial *alif*s except those which belong to the definite article *al* or bear a *maddah* (see note 10). When the purpose is to indicate the presence of the sound described as a glottal stop, it is written over internal and final *alif*, *wāw*, and *yā'* (without dots). *Hamzah* following i is written ئ (almost always the *yā'* is in the ـ or ـ form) and the dots are omitted. Example: ـ . *Hamzah* following u is written ؤ . *Hamzah* following a long vowel is written ء without anything under it ("without a bearer"). The transliteration of *hamzah* (') should always be carefully distinguished from that of *ʿayn* (ʿ).

2. *Alif* as such is not transliterated when it is bearer of *hamzah*, but see *fathah alif* and *alif maddah* in Table II. See also note 1 above and note 10.

3. An original *tā'* in certain endings is written ة (i.e., *hā'* with two dots) and is called *tā' marbūṭah*. It is transliterated h (silent), except when followed by another word in a unitary expression, when it is transliterated t, as in *hamzah* (isolated form) and *hamzat al waṣl*. A pronounced final *hā'* occurs and for bibliographical purposes may be transliterated /h when a *fathah* precedes it (Al Mara/h). Cf. also note 4.

4. The two-letter symbols th, kh, dh, sh, and gh are convenient for use and easily comprehensible. The infrequent sequences of t, k, d, or s followed by h can be unequivocally transliterated for bibliographical purposes by the use of a slant line ("shilling," "solidus") to separate true h from a preceding t, k, d, or s; that is, th represents *thā'*, but t/h stands for *tā'* followed by *hā'*. Cf. also note 3.

5. Where special considerations are paramount, the sub-dot (ḥ, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ) may be used in place of the cedilla (ḥ, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ).

   The letter *yā'* is also used in writing *alif maqṣūrah* in which the dots are omitted. See Table II.

7. The classical Arabic grammatical endings written with the so-called nunation symbols (Arabic *tanwīn*) may be transliterated when necessary by a^n, i^n, u^n. In modern Arabic these endings have become silent and are omitted in transliteration: classical *alifu^n*, modern *alif*.

8. Doubled consonant sounds are written in Arabic by placing the *tashdīd* over the consonant letter written once. In transliteration the letter should be doubled. When the definite article *al* precedes a word beginning with t, th, d, dh, r, s, sh, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ, l, n (the so-called "sun letters"), the l is assimilated in pronunciation, giving tt, thth, etc. In transliteration this l should be omitted and the following letter written twice, once after the a of the article and secondly at the beginning of the next word. Example: An Nil, not Al Nil.

9. *Hamzat al waṣl* is transliterated ' in classical forms, as illustrated in its classical name *hamzatu 'l waṣli*, but ignored in modern forms, as in *hamzat al waṣl*.

10. *Maddah* is a horizontal wavy line over *alif*. Since *maddah* nearly always occurs in word-initial position, no confusion results from the use of ā for *alif maddah* as well as for *fathah alif*.

11. Initial definite articles and prepositions should be capitalized and hyphens should not be used to connect parts of names; e.g., Ash Shāriqah and Tall al Lahm.