

UNITED NATIONS
Third Session of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts
on Geographical Names
2 to 12 February 1971

Information Paper No. 1

Reprint of Resolution 19 on Geographical Names
adopted by the Sixth United Nations Regional
Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Far East

The Conference.

Noting the resolutions of the United Nations Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names held in Geneva in 1967^{14/}

Further noting that the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names will be held in London early in 1972,

Recognizes the necessity of standardizing geographical names for both national and international use and the importance of a continuing effort by the Member States of the United Nations and Members of its Special Agencies and other interested international organizations in advancing the standardization of geographical names,

Endorses resolution 4, ^{15/} of the Geneva Conference that each country should establish a national geographical names authority consisting of a continuing body or co-ordinated group of bodies having clearly stated authority and instructions for the standardization of geographical names and the determination of names standardization policy within the country,

Further endorses the proposal of the Geneva Conference to form linguistic/
geographical divisions,^{16/}

14/ United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Vol.1, Report of the Conference, pages 9 to 15 (Sales No. E.68.I.9)

15/ Ibid, pages 10 and 11

16/ "In support of this resolution, a working group from the ECAFE region recommended that each division should commence regional meetings and appoint representatives to the United Nations Group of Experts:

Thailand was unanimously elected by delegates representing the following countries of the South East Asian division: VietNam, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Philippines, to represent the South East Asian region in the third session of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Geographical Names to be held in New York in February 1971.

Thailand will therefore be responsible for convening such regional meetings as and when necessary at Bangkok to which representatives from Burma, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Philippines are to be invited to present their views to enable the regional representative (Thailand) to have a consolidated stand in the Group of Experts. National representation to the second United Nations Conference on Geographical Names is strongly advocated as it is the opinion of the working group that only a national representative can truly present the innumerable problems of each country concerned, whilst the Group of Experts could only provide a solution if it is aware of the existence of such problems in the South East Asian countries each of which may have the multi-complexities of a conglomeration of multilingual and minority lingual societies.

Recommends that the linguistic/geographical divisions representing Asia should commence regional meetings and appoint representatives to the United Nations Group of Experts,

Recommends further the compilation of lists and national gazetteers of standardized names for international use and the formation of a communication network for exchanging experiences in names standardization, glossaries of regularities of geographical names phenomena, gazetteers of standardized names and other related material in accordance with the aims, functions and modus operandi of the Group of Experts as contained in the report of its second session, held in New York in March 1970,

Urges that all states members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies and also interested international organizations should send representatives to the forthcoming Conference in London in 1972.

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The Conference,

Noting the activities of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names established in accordance with the Economic and Social Council resolution 1314 (XLIV),

Considering the importance of national and international names standardization with regard to maps and atlases as tools of international co-operation,

Expresses its strong support to the Group of Experts, charged with providing continuous co-ordination and liaison among countries to further the standardization of geographical names and to encourage the formation and the work of linguistic/geographical divisions,

Endorses the decision that the Group of Experts help in the preparation and organization of the Second United Nations Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names to be held in London, early in 1972,

Further endorses the decision that the three working groups set up at the second session of the Group of Experts, held in New York during March 1970 to study the following topics,

- (a) the naming of undersea features
- (b) extraterrestrial topographic names
- (c) a single romanization system

and to report on these studies to the forthcoming Conference in London in 1972

Urges the Group of Experts

- (a) to make recommendations for national standardization
- (b) to outline the form of national gazetteers of geographical names
- (c) to investigate the problem of romanization systems and to recommend suitable solutions to the forthcoming conference,

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The Conference.

Noting the initial steps undertaken by the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in Geneva during September 1967 to clear up the problem of transferring geographical names from non-Roman alphabets into romanized forms,

Further noting the resolutions of the Geneva Conference on the acceptance of Thai and Iranian official systems of transferring their geographical names into romanized forms,^{17/}

Draws to the attention of the forthcoming second Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the desirability of reaching an agreement on a single romanized system for each non-Roman alphabet to be used for international mapping, although a variety of popular transcriptions will inevitably survive, since every language has its own spelling peculiarities.

7 November 1970

^{17/} Ibid, page 13