FIFTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
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Item 4, of the agenda
11(a)

REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR
REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON PROGRESS IN THE STANDARDIZATION
OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE FOURTH CONFERENCE

WRITING SYSTEMS AND GUIDES TO PRONUNCIATION

ROMANIZATION

Report on the State of Standardization of
Geographical Names and Romanization in Korea

Paper submitted by the Republic of Korea
Item 4 and 11(a)

Report on the State of
Standardization of Geographical Names and Romanization in Korea

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For the uniform romanization of Korean the Government of the Republic of Korea adopted guidelines in 1959, but since that adoption we did not still have a uniform transcription and transliteration of Korean into Roman alphabets in writing Korean geographical names. This of course brought out inconveniences and discrepancies in geographical names related business, especially for foreigners involved one.

To solve this problem the Government, under the direction of the Ministry of Education, established in 1978 the Committee of Romanization of Korean, consisted of expert group of scholars and journalists. The Committee, after a research of several years, finally worked out in 1984 a Gazetteer containing 7,000 geographical names of administrative units, sightseeing places, railroad stations etc... in Korea. This achievement in response to resolutions of the previous U.N. Conferences on Standardization of Geographical Names is a milestone in Korean geographical names work that is expected to develop with more vigor in future.

At the same time, the Committee adopted the new Guidelines for the Romanization of Korean. The new Guidelines was prepared for the sole purpose of uniform romanization of Korean that may be transcribed or transliterated in different ways. This Guidelines distributed as Working Paper 47 to the participants of 11th Group of Experts meeting in Geneva is reproduced in following pages.
Guidelines for the Romanization of Korean

1. Basic Principles for Transcription

i. Romanization is based on standard Korean pronunciation.

ii. No symbols except Roman letters are used, so far as possible.

iii. Romanization follows the principle of 'one letter (or set of letters) per phoneme.'

2. Summary of the Transcription System

(1) Vowels are transcribed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple vowels</th>
<th>Diphthongs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a o u ü i e e oe</td>
<td>ya yŏ yo yu yae ye üi wa wo wae we wi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Note] Long vowels are not marked in transcription.

(2) Consonants are transcribed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plosives (stops)</th>
<th>Affricates</th>
<th>Fricatives</th>
<th>Nasals</th>
<th>Liquids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k, g</td>
<td>ch, j</td>
<td>s, sh</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>r, l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k′</td>
<td>tch</td>
<td>ss</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td>h</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee</td>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t, d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tt t′</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p, b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pp p′</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
[Note 1] ㄱ, ㄷ, ㅂ and ㅅ are transcribed respectively as g, d, b and 
j, between vowels; or between ㄴ, ㄹ, ㅁ, or ㅇ and a vowel; 
od otherwise they are transcribed as k, t, p, and ch.

  e.g. 가구 kagu  바둑 paduk  갑비 kalbi
       제주 Cheju  닭배 tambae  반침 patch'lm

[Note 2] ㅅ is transcribed as s except in the case of 시, when it 
is transcribed as sh.

  e.g. 시추 shiru  신안 Shinan  신촌 Shinc'hon
        부산 Pusan  상표 sang'yo  창소 hwangso

[Note 3] ㅈ is transcribed as r before a vowel, and as l before a 
consonant or at the end of a word: ㅉ is transcribed as 
l.

  e.g. 사랑 sarang  물건 mulg'on  밥 pal
        진달래 chindallae

3. Special Provisions for Transcription

(1) When Korean sound values change as in the following cases, the results 
of those changes are transcribed as follows:

  1. The case of assimilation of adjacent consonants

    e.g. 낮 물 naenmul  부엌문 puongmun
         낮는다 nangnunda  닦는다 tannunda
         짜는다 kamnunda  진 렇 chilli
         싱 렇 shimni  압 렇 amnyok
         독 렟 tongnip

  2. The case of the epenthetic ㅅ and ㄹ

    e.g. 가랑일 karangnip  냉 일 nannil
         닭 요 tamnyo  용이불 honnibul
         불 일 p'ullip  뜨 악 mullysak
3. The case of palatalization

   e.g. 군 이 kuji          에든이 haedoji
       간 이 kach'i

4. The case when ᄜ, ᄷ, ᄽ, and ᄀ are adjacent to ᄏ

   e.g. 국 하,kuk'wa       날다 nat'a
       밑하다 palp'ida       맞히다 mach'ida

   [Note] The tense (or glottalized) sounds, which occur in cases when
          morphemes are compounded as in the examples below, are tran-
          scribed by voiceless consonants.

   e.g. 장기(長経) changki     사 진 sakön
       맛 가 naetka           작 두 chaktu
       신 다 shinta          산 폭 sanpul

(2) When there is a possibility of confusion in pronunciation, or a need for
    segmentation, a hyphen '－' may be used.

   e.g. 장 이 chang-i          장기(長経) chan-gi
       금기에 mulka-e         종로에 Chongno-e

   [Note] In the transcription of personal names and names of adminis-
           trative units, assimilated sound changes before or after a hy-
           then are not transcribed.

   e.g. 김복남 Kim Pok-nam      사복면 Sabuk-myŏn

(3) The first letter is capitalized in proper names.

   e.g. 인 친 Inch'ŏn           대 구 Taegu
        세 종 Sejong

(4) Personal names are written by family name first, followed by a space and
    then the given name. A hyphen will separate given names, except that
    non-Sino-Korean given names may be joined without a hyphen.

   e.g. 김성호 Kim Chŏng-bo
       남중 동자 Namgung Tong-cha
Son Mi-hui-cha
Chong Maria
Han Hana

(5) In spite of the Note to (2) above, administrative units such as 도, 시, 군, 구, 읍, 면, 리, 동 and 가 are transcribed respectively as do, shi, gun, gu, up, myon, ri, dong, and ga and are preceded by a hyphen.

e.g. 충청북도 Ch'ungch'ŏngbuk-do
제주도 Cheju-do
의정부시 Uijongbu-shi
파주군 P'aju-gun
도봉구 Tobong-gu
신창읍 Shinch'ang-ŭp
주덕면 Chunae-myŏn
인왕리 Inwang-ri
당산동 Tangsan-dong
봉천2동 Pongch'ŏn 2-dong
종로2가 Chongno 2-ga
의계로5가 T'oegyero 5-ga

[Note] Terms for administrative units such as 특별시, 지방시, 시, 군, 읍 and so on may be omitted.

e.g. 부산직할시 Pusan
신창읍 Shinch'ang

(6) Names of geographic features, cultural properties, and man-made structures may be written without hyphens.

e.g. 남산 Namsan
금강 Kŭmgang
해운대 Haeundae
도산서원 Tosan'so'won
현충사 Hyŏnc'ungsa
오죽헌 Ojuk'ŏn
숙리산 Songnisan
독도 Tokto
경복궁 Kyŏngbokkung
불국사 Pulguksa
독립문 Tongnimmun
촉석루 Ch'oksóngnu
[Note] Hyphens may be inserted in words of five syllables or more.
e.g. 금동미륵보살반가사 Kumdong-mireubossal-bangasa

(7) Some proper names, which cannot be abruptly changed in view of international practices and common longstanding transcriptions, may be written as follows:

e.g. 서울 Seoul
이순신 Yi Sun-shin
이승만 Syngman Rhee
이화 Ewha

(8) When they are difficult to print or to typewrite, the breve ‘’ in č, š, š, and je, and the apostrophe ‘’ in č, ć, ši, and je, may be omitted as long as there is no confusion in meaning.