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

Report of the Delegation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

(Submitted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)\*\*/

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I. Introduction

From citing the name of Libya which is said to have been the name of a Greek Princess, it becomes clear how much the geographical names in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya have been affected by many of the passing civilizations in Libya such as Greek, Roman, Islamic and other civilizations.

II. Mapping of Libya

Libya was occupied several times, and was the stage for many battles. Many of the armies engaged in those battles have had maps prepared for large areas in Libya. The Italians, who occupied Libya in 1911 covered most of its area with topographic maps (scale 1:400,000). So are the British, who participated in World War II and occupied Libya for sometime. They covered some vital territories with maps (scale 1:100,000). The U.S. Army which had some military bases, also prepared maps for the coastal areas of Libya (scale 1:250,000 and 1:50,000).

These maps, although prepared with great precision, lacked this precision in placement of their geographical names, either because the local inhabitants have not given

the name properly, or because these names were not written in latin letters to help give the right pronunciation. The imprecision could also be because of the misspelling of some of the words.

### III. Recent accomplishments in mapping the Jamahiriya

In the early seventies, the Jamahiriya began to update and Arabise the U.S. maps. Also, expansion in the production of maps (scale 1:50,000) in economically feasible areas were implemented.

- A) The Jamahiriya also implemented a large project which included:
- i) Preparation of maps (scale 1:25,000) to cover an area of 340,000 square kilometres (1970 sheets)
  - ii) Preparation of maps (scale 1:100,000) to cover all Libyan territories and to cover an area of 1,756,000 square kilometres.
  - iii) Preparation of maps (scale 1:250,000) to cover all Libyan territories.
- B. A decision was made to establish a national committee for the standardization of geographical names formed of different relevant governmental agencies such as the armed forces, municipalities, universities, etc. The committee has begun its work and it took specific approaches and steps to establish a data base on geographical names:

- i) development of a form, to collect data pertaining to each sheet, listing all geographical features, their names, and their coordinates.
- ii) collection of names by identifying the actual location and having a sound recording to be endorsed by local authorities.

The Committee has faced, however, some difficulties in the process of collection of names, as follows:

1. The repetition of similar names in several regions of the Jamahiriya. For example the name of Wadi Al Farigh is repeated in several locations.
2. In the vast desert areas often there are no names given, or even landmarks to identify names.
3. Sometimes two different names are given to the same feature.

#### IV. Recommendations

- A) To encourage the establishment of a regional committee on geographical names in all Arab countries speaking the same language, to coordinate the activities of all local committees in each of the Arab countries and to have names adjusted and standardized for mapping use.
- B) To request the United Nations (or UNESCO) to interfere to prevent occupying authorities from changing Arabic names in the holy places in Palestine as well as any other features.

C) To request the countries which has worked and is working on the preparation of lists of names of different countries of the world, to disseminate this information among those countries to benefit from this information, or to correct the names if mistakes or misunderstandings occur in placing these names.