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SEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES  
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Item 5 (d) of the provisional agenda\*

NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE  
OF NATIONAL NAMES AUTHORITIES

Korean National Geographic Names Authority

(Submitted by The Republic of Korea)

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## **1. The Organization of Korean National Geographical Name Authority**

The official government authority on place names was established in 1981 by a surveying law. The purpose of the authority is for officially recognizing, changing, creating, and recording geographic place names. There are three hierarchical organization layers that share naming responsibilities: (1) the Central Committee of

Geographical Names which is affiliated with Ministry of Construction and Transportation, (2) a committee consisting of the Special City of Seoul, Metropolitan City, and the Provincial Committees of Geographical Names, and (3) a third committee consisting of the City, District, and County Committees. The designation of geographical names is done through a three-step process involving each of the three above mentioned Committees. First, a City, District, and County Committee considers a given or proposed place name, makes its recommendation, and then sends its report to the appropriate Special or Metropolitan City and Provincial Committee. The Special or Metropolitan City and Provincial Committees re-evaluates the suggested designation (following the same procedure). Finally, the Central Committee reviews the previous Committee reports and make a decision. Then, the Minister of Construction and Transportation issues a public notice of the geographical names deliberated and decided upon by the Central Committee, under the conditions as prescribed by a Presidential Degree. Currently, the higher authority resides in the Central Committee, which consists of fifteen or fewer members; including the chairman (Chief of the National Geographic Institute), the vice-chairman (Director of the Cartographic Division of the Institute), six government officials, one historian, and seven toponymic experts. The City, District, and County Committees comprise seven or fewer members. The Special City, Metropolitan City, and Provincial Committee membership is limited to ten.

## **2. Membership Requirements of the Central Committee**

Nominating the Committee members, the Chairman shall observe the following representation requirements.

- 1) One director each from the Ministries of Home Affairs and National Defense, recommended by their respective Ministers.
- 2) One director or school commissioner in charge of textbook standardization representing the Ministry of Education, recommended by the Education Minister.
- 3) One director from the Ministry of Construction and Transportation, responsible for hydrography, recommended by the Minister.

- 4) One director from the Ministry of Culture and Sports responsible for cultural properties.
- 5) A researcher from the Commission on Editing National History, recommended by that Commission's chairman.
- 6) Seven or fewer experts in the standardization of place names, nominated by the chief of the National Geographic Institute.