

New York, 26 February - 9 March 1979
Agenda item No.6 of Provisional Agenda

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

(Submitted by the Government of Zambia)

The only activity which the Government of the Republic of Zambia made after the 3rd UN Conference on the standardisation of geographical names was the appointment of the standing committee on the standardisation of the geographical place names. This committee's terms of reference are "to advise the Government on questions relating to geographical nomenclatures in the country" This committee will now be in the position to contribute more to the country and international activities in so far as standardisation of geographical names ~~is~~ concerned taking into consideration the resolutions adopted at both the Geneva, London and Athens conferences as well as the studies made by other countries in this regard.

This standing committee has already met and among the recommendations it made were:-

- a. to establish the provincial sub-committees*
- b. to establish the working committee .*

After ^{such} a working committee has been appointed, it started to prepare the ground for the main task of revising the country's gazetteer which is being done now by the cartographic section of the Survey Department. The names are based on the 1:50,000 topographical map series.

This dictionary of geographical names contains some 35,000 names which are arranged alphabetically. Some of the names have been found to be incorrectly spelt and many more names are to be added in it and on cartographical publications such as maps.

Although there are 73 linguistic groups which have almost the same script characters that differ mostly from one another, Zambia from its inception adopted the English language as official language with roman letters for spelling of words. The spelling of the words now follows for the most part, the international phonetic arrangement.

Training

In order to understand the gravity of the problem of standardisation of geographical names in a country like Zambia it must be remembered that many settlements have

emerged in different parts of the country and therefore, it is necessary that more field workers are trained before they are expected to effectively deal with the name cards. So far, we have not yet sent any to some countries for training. But it is a wish of the Zambian Government to send some of its able officers from the Survey Department to some countries where the training course can be obtained.

List of Names

The current Gazetteer for geographical names of Zambia which was prepared by the U.S.A. can stand as a list of names for Zambia on the "Working group on the list of names." As it has been stated above about the volume of work which our ne^w standing committee is undertaking, it is felt that new names and correctly spelt names will take some time before they are finally approved and published by the Government.

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