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English only

**Eighth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**

Berlin, 27 August-5 September 2002

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of
geographical names since the Seventh Conference**

Report of Greece

Submitted by Greece**

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** Prepared by Ioannis Papaioannou, Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service.

Given that in Greece there is not yet governmental agency for the centralized function of collection, registration and standardization of all types of geographical names, a Working Group for the Standardization of Geographical Names, consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior and governmental cartographic organizations, was established in 1997. The primary task of this Working Group is to study the status, structure and function of a National Committee on Geographical Names and propose amendments to existing national legislation for the enhancement of the recommendations of the UN for the Standardization of Geographical Names. Another task of the Working Group is the promotion of the coordination of the various national authorities, currently involved in the standardization of Geographical names.

Toponyms of inhabited places

The determination of official geographical names rests with the Ministry of Interior. The decision is normally taken after a recommendation of the Committee of Toponyms, consisting of representatives from the Directorate of Toponyms of the Ministry of Interior, regional and local authorities, governmental cartographic agencies and linguists from the academic community. This committee considers proposals for new names, usually submitted by local authorities, from the linguistic, aesthetic, social and historical aspect and recommends their approval or rejection.

Names of geographical features

The names of geographical features such as mountains, hills, rivers, lakes, gulfs, bays etc., are collected and registered by the two governmental cartographic agencies namely the Hellenic Military Geographic Service (HMGS) and the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service (HNHS). The two agencies coordinate their work for the proper depiction of these names on maps and nautical charts, the development of toponymic data files and the publication of relevant gazetteers. The final decision for the determination of the official names of these features rests with the Ministry of Interior after a recommendation of the above-mentioned committee of toponyms.

Odonyms and other microtoponyms

Odonyms and other microtoponyms (squares, parks etc.) within the area of jurisdiction of municipalities are determined by decisions of the council of the elected representatives of the local communities concerned.

Maritime and undersea feature names

Taking into consideration the morphology of the Greek territory [coastline of more than 16,000 kms, multitude of islands, islets and rocks (approx. 9,500), straits and channels (161), harbors and ports (500)], the standardization of maritime and undersea feature names in Greece constitutes a huge burden of work. For the proper depiction of these names in nautical charts, HNHS has developed a maritime toponymic database, consisting of approximately 10,000 entries (gulfs, bays, capes, islands, islets, rocks and undersea features) of the Greek coasts and territorial seas.

The names of undersea features included in this database are exclusively those adopted by the GEBCO Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names and approved by the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO).

National cartographic programs

The Hellenic Military Geographic Service (HMGS) and the Hellenic Navy Hydrographic Service (HNHS), both governmental cartographic agencies, produce the official land maps and nautical charts of Greece. Since the last national report, during the seventh UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (New York 1998), HMGS has revised 92 sheets of 1:50,000 land maps in Greek and Romanized version; HNHS has published 35 nautical charts at various scales and has revised 25. In March 2001, a project for the production of

Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs) has been started by HNHS. According to this project, which will be completed within the next two years, 15 ENCs have already been produced in romanized version.

Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors

The last edition of the toponymic guidelines for map and other editors has been published in 1997 and presented during the 7th UNCSGN (New York 1998).

Country Names

A biscriptual (Greek and Romanized) list of country names has been created in 2002 and will be presented during the Conference.

Other publications

The Greek version of the UNGEGN Brochure has been created in 2002, sponsored by the Hellenic Military Geographic Service. This Brochure will be presented during the Conference.
