

26 August 2002

Original: English

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

Standardization of Geographical Names in Cyprus

(Submitted by the Republic of Cyprus)**

*E/CONF.94/1

**Prepared by Mr. Prodromos Vasileiou, President of the Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names

**Report of the Cyprus Permanent Committee for the
Standardization of Geographical Names.
Activities since the Seventh Conference.**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The United Nations in recognising the great meaning and value of Geographical names all over the world and the difficulty caused in the work of geographers, mapmakers, statisticians, census takers and many others, due to the lack of standardized names, undertook international efforts for the standardization of geographical names and the transcription of non roman alphabets to the roman alphabet for immediate and continued international communication.
- 1.2 Cyprus began dealing with the geographical names since 1950 to resolve some inconsistencies and contradiction of spelling, for mapping and administrative matters. Gradually and in 1962 an ad-hoc committee was set up to meet the Decision N^o 814 (xxi) of 27 April 1961, of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, regarding the standardization of geographical names, which recommends and encourages all countries members of the U.N. to submit information and methods adopted in their countries on the subject.
- 1.3 The Cyprus Republic complying as well, with the resolution of the United Nations Conference on the standardization of Geographical names has kept abreast of the subject and participated to the first conference held in Geneva in 1967 with two representatives, specially appointed by the Council of Ministers for this purpose. Since then, Cyprus participates to all the conferences, sessions and in the Linguistic divisions meetings to which Cyprus is a member.

2. Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names (C.P.C.S.G.N.)

- 2.1 The C.P.C.S.G.N. was established in April 1977 by decision of the Council of Ministers N^o 15769 and constitutes the only competent National Authority for the standardization of geographical names. It consisted of 5 members as interdepartmental committee from various related Government Departments, responsible for collection and standardization of the geographical names of Cyprus.
- 2.2 In 1997, by decision again of the Council of Ministers a new committee was appointed, increasing the members from five to ten (the President and nine members). This committee is consisted of one Geographer-Cartographer (the president), five Philologists, three glossologists (linguists) and one lawyer.

3. Law about the establishment of the C.P.C.S.G.N. and the proceedings for the standardization of geographical names.

- 3.1 In 1998 a law, N^o 66(1) of 1998, about the establishment of the C.P.C.S.G.N. and the proceedings for the standardization of geographical names came into force and was published in the Official Gazette of Cyprus N^o 3257 of July 1998. Up to that date, July 1998, there was not any law supporting the work of the Committee, except of some direct decisions by the Council of Ministers. With this law the

C.P.C.S.G.N. becomes under the Ministry of Education and Culture and recognizes all the work done by the above said committee before the act of the present law, as if it has been done according to this law.

3.2 With this law, in addition to the Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names, a Geographical Names Advisory Committee was established. This committee is composed of five experts (Glossologists/Linguists) a presiding and four members, all academics appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Two from the University of Cyprus, one from the University of Athens, one from the University of Thessaloniki, Greece and one from the University of Sorbon, Paris. This committee will be responsible for:

- a) Examining all the matters which will be referred to it by the Cyprus Permanent Committee, and
- b) Investigating objections submitted to it by any interested body or person and
- c) Submitting the results of its investigation to the C.P.C.S.G.N., for decision.

3.3 The Ministry of Education and Culture was obliged to make regulations necessary for expedient application of the law. For the preparation of these regulations the C.P.C.S.G.N. worked hard in close co-operation with the Attorney's General Office and the Ministry of Education and Culture. These regulations were submitted to the House of Representatives to be included to the law about the proceedings for the standardization of geographical names N^o 66(i) of 1998, which law, by the way, has also been duly amended. Both the amended law as a new law N^o 146(1) of 2001 and the regulations N^o 443 of 2001 were approved by the House of Representatives and the Council of Ministers and published to the Official Gazette of the Republic of Cyprus N^o 3551 of 30/11/2001.

4. Romanization System of the Greek Alphabet

4.1 The Council of Ministers of Cyprus, following the approval of the Romanization system of the Greek alphabet, EAOT 743, submitted by Greece and Cyprus, at the 5th Conference in 1987, by virtue of their decision N^o 31075 dated 15/12/1988 the system was also approved and instructed its obligatory application to all Government and Semi government editions and publications.

The system has been successfully implemented to cartographic products, administrative documents, passports, identity cards, street names, postal codes, telecommunication etc. The C.P.C.S.G.N. works hard, giving advices for the correct application of the system. Currently the Committee continues its efforts for the implementation of the Romanization system to the private sector; organizations and individuals and to some local banks. In order to facilitate the use of the system by the recipients, conversion packages are provided.

5. Booklet/Guide for the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Romanization system of Greek alphabet etc.

5.1 A Booklet/Guide has been compiled and includes a large number of items to cover all the sectors involved with naming and geographical names, to ensure the unified and consistent use of the names e.g. guides and principles for the standardization of geographical names, the Romanization system of the Greek alphabet, the language, phonemes and pronunciation, grammar, foreign words in the common language, diacritics, abbreviations, guides and principles for

odonyms (street names). It includes tables of all the names of towns and villages of Cyprus, as they have been standardized by the competent national C.P.C.S.G.N. and appear on the official administration & road maps of Cyprus. It is consisted of about 70 pages including examples, tables and charts, it is suitable for local use and needs, and it is written in the Greek language.

It is already completed and shortly will be published and distributed, free of charge to the public.

6. Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors.

(Item 9(e) of theprovisional agenda)

6.1 The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names in compliance with the repeated resolutions of the U.N. Conferences on the standardization of geographical names N^o 4 of the 4th Conference (Geneva, 1982), N^o 14 of the 5th Conference (Montreal, 1987) and N^o 7 of the 6th Conference (New York, 1992) on the item “Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors”, proceeded to the compilation of the first edition, to meet the needs of the editors using geographical names and enable cartographers of Cyprus and of other countries, to treat correctly the names.

6.2 The Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors was prepared in 2000 and was submitted in draft form to the two Romano-Hellenic Division Meetings held the first in Firenze, Italy, July 2000 and the second in Athens, Greece, October 2001. It was also submitted in draft form to the 16th Session of the East Central and South-East Europe Division held in Ljubliana, Slovenia, April 2001. Always in draft form because of legislative reasons. The C.P.C.S.G.N. had not any right to proceed to any final work, edition or publication since, the final approval of the above mentioned new amended law and the regulations about the proceedings for the standardization of geographical names, were pending to the House of Representatives and the Council of Ministers. Both, the law and the regulations were approved in November 2001.

After some amendments the Toponymic Guidelines text is submitted to the present Conference. It is in the English language and comprises all the items enough for the user, for correct implementation of geographical Names. It is our first edition and please feel free to contact us and we will appreciate it, for any remarks on it, any mistakes or misunderstandings, to be included to an improved future edition.

7. Names of Countries and their Capitals

(Item N^o 18 of theprovisional agenda)

7.1 Cyprus complying again with the U.N. recommendations to all countries members to establish an official list of *names of countries of the world and their capitals* in their official languages, proceeded with the compilation of the list of countries and capitals in the Greek language. This is a necessity and will help to solve various practical problems to many editors and publications specially in cartographic publications; educational books, etc and the public information media.

7.2 The same also happens as the Toponymic Guidelines above. The list of Countries of the World and their Capitals was submitted to the above named meetings and also in draft form, for the same legislative reasons as already explained.

- 7.3 The List of Countries of the World and their Capitals is submitted to the present Conference. It is divided in six columns:
The first column **No**, indicates the serial number.
The second column **ISO CODE**, in three letters.
The third column **NAME**, the name of the country in GREEK and below the ROMANIZED NAME according to “ELOT 743” conversion of the Greek alphabet into Roman and under this the ENGLISH NAME as defined in the international standard ISO 639 (1988).
The fourth column **FULL NAME**, the name of the Country in full and below the full name Romanized.
The fifth column **CAPITAL**, the name of the capital in Greek and below the Romanized name.
The sixth column **CONTINENT**, the name of the continent to which it belongs.

8. Translation and publication of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names promotional Brochure.

- 8.1 During the Romano-Hellenic Division Meeting in Athens, Greece, October 2001, drafts of the UNGEGN brochure in the Greek, Italian and Spanish languages were presented.
- 8.2 At a previous meeting of the two delegations of Greece and Cyprus it was agreed to co-operate and proceed together with the translation to the Greek language of the UNGEGN promotional brochure. This was succeeded, is published and is submitted for distribution to the present conference. Locally this brochure will be distributed to all Government and Semi government Offices, to private organizations, individuals and others.

9. Odonyms (Street names).

- 9.1 For the last 5 years there is an increased request to C.P.C.S.G.N. to offer its services to the Government, Municipal and Communal Authorities, for the standardization and transcription of the old and new odonyms.
- 9.2 In Cyprus, the odonyms are subject to the Ministry of Interior, the Municipal and Communal Authorities. All the names given are referred to the Cypms Permanent Committee for standardization and transcription, for grammatical correction, if necessary and for uniformity all over the island. Since the 7th Conference more than 20000 odonyms have been treated by the Committee.
- 9.3 The greek odonyms, as these are expressed with the terms *ODOS* (street), *LEOFOROS* (avenue), *PLATEIA* (square) are all in genitive case. For the greek odonyms of Cyprus, the following principles are applied:
- a) All the given names are complete, to identify the persons, in favour of whom these are given.
 - b) The names of the ancient language are recorded to the ancient type of the genitive type, as it happens and to the surnames of the citizens. The names of the modern language are recorded to the modern type of the genitive case.
 - c) The transcription to the approved roman system, where it is applicable, its obligatory.
 - d) On the road signs, the greek names are written on the upper level and lower the roman type.

10. Works in progress.

10.1 The works that are currently in progress are the following:

- a) Publication of the Booklet/Guide for local use.
- b) Compilation of a new and improved edition of the *Concise Gazetteer* consisting of about 2500 names.
- c) Standardization and preparation of an index of all the *Names of Antiquities and Ancient Monuments*, in co-operation with the Department of Antiquities.

11. As a future program the following works have been scheduled.

- a) Exonyms
- b) The preparation of a new *Administration Map* in co-operation with the Dept. of L&S, showing the administrative divisions of Cyprus, Regions, Districts Municipalities and Communities.
- c) The Compilation of a glossary under the title *Generic terms in Cyprus Geographical Names*.
- d) The compilation of volume II of the “*A Complete Gazetteer of Cyprus*”. This however cannot be succeeded because a further research and field work is needed to complement the whole project by adding the geographical names which do not constitute official names but exist and are part of the culture of the Cypriots and the scientific work regarding the local enquiry and field checking for verification is not possible in the northern part of the island, due to the Turkish military occupation which renders it inaccessible to the competent authority.
- e) The preparation of “*A Complete Odonyms Gazetteer*” for the free area only and not for the whole of the island because of the same reasons referred above.
- f) The standardization of cartographical symbols.

12. Conferences and Meetings

Item 6(d)

12.1 Cyprus takes part in the Conferences, Sessions and Meetings of the UN on the Standardization of Geographical Names and is a member in four Linguistic Divisions.

- a) *The Romano-Hellenic Division.*
- b) *The East-Central and South-East Europe Division.*
- c) *The Asia South- West Division (other than the Arabic Division).*
- d) *The East Mediterranean (Other than Arabic).*

12.2 Since the Seventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Cyprus Republic participated at the following Meetings:

- a) The Twentieth Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names held in New York, January 2000,
- b) The Romano-Hellenic Division Meeting held in Firenze Italy, July, 2000,
- c) The 16th Session of the East-Central and South-East Europe Division held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, April 2001,
- d) The Romano-Hellenic Division Meeting held in Athens, Greece, October 2001 and
- e) The Seventh United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas held in New York, January 2001.

13 Training Courses in Toponyms

Item 17(b)

13.1 The C.P.C.S.G.N. strongly believes that the training courses and seminars in toponyms and toponymic data bank systems are of great value, useful and very effective.

13.2 The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names did not have yet the opportunity to participate in such training courses and we feel that are missing to us. Although we were very much interested to participate to the very well organised training course in toponymy which currently takes place here in Germany, congratulations to the organizers, unfortunately we could not take part to it because of the age criteria. As from the next year two newly appointed members of the committee will fulfil the criteria and we will greatly appreciate it, if a member of our committee will be considered as a candidate, in such a future training program.

13.3 What we intend to do after the completion of the training course to one of the members of the Committee.

Our aim and it is in our program, is to establish a small team of experts on the standardization of geographical names, members of the C.P.C.S.G.N., who will organise courses and provide at national level a good professional training for personnel involved in Toponymic work and the treatment of geographical names in general.

14. Conclusion.

14.1 The C.P.C.S.G.N., recognising the strong meaning of the Standardization of Geographical Names, works hard to comply with the resolutions of the U.N. conferences on this issue and offers its good services to any, body or individual.

It is apparent from the above that during the last five years a lot of activities and works have been done and we are satisfied, although always more could be done.