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

Report of Finland

Submitted by Finland**

Summary***

The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland holds the right and responsibility for providing normative recommendations for Finnish, Swedish and Saami place names. The recommendations are based on linguistic considerations, cultural history, local tradition and the practical demands of everyday life.

During the period 2002-2006, the Research Institute's names collection was supplemented with approximately 19,000 name entries, of which some 1,000 are northern Saami names.

The Research Institute checks and approves the names in national topographic maps produced by the National Land Survey of Finland. During the period 2004-2007, this work focused on the northernmost Lapland and Saami names with the objective of preparing a topographic database for the National Land Survey covering the whole country in 2007. A considerable number of both Saami and Finnish names have also been collected in the area.

Name planning in Finland has been centrally affected by the reform of municipality and service structures. The objective of the reform is to reduce the number of municipalities, through, for example, municipal mergers, until approximately 200 municipalities are left. For this reason, the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland has issued a recommendation on principles that should be

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*** The full text of the report is being issued in English only as document E/CONF.98/132/Add.1.



followed when choosing new names. The most significant recommendation on urban names was that made by the City of Helsinki Place Names Committee on commemorating individuals, companies and communities in the planning of new place names in Helsinki.

New publications on foreign place names — mainly for the media — have been issued. The most urgently needed was the handbook of spelling and stress patterns of place names in the Russian Federation.

The National Land Survey maintains the Geographic Names Register, a toponymic-cartographic database designed to assist in the standardization of geographical names and to provide national geographical information for map data production. MapSite, a free Internet map service of the Land Survey of Finland, has been renewed and is now available from the website www.karttapaikka.fi.

The full report of Finland also includes a list of relevant publications related to geographical names and name standardization in Finland.
