



## Economic and Social Council

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### **Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names**

New York, 21-30 August 2007

Item 12 (e) of the provisional agenda\*

**Toponymic data files: compatibility and structure of systems**

### **The manual and latest enhancements to the South African Geographical Names System (SAGNS)**

**Submitted by South Africa\*\***

The Department of Arts and Culture has been implementing the South African Geographical Names System since 2003 with the purpose of maintaining and administrating the authoritative database for place names in South Africa. This system has undergone major redevelopment during 2006 to enhance the streamlining of business processes and effective monitoring, capturing and dissemination of place-name information in an efficient, cost-effective and secure manner.

Enhancements to the South African Geographical Names System include the following:

- (a) The functionality to trace existing names when a new name is registered online;
- (b) References to magisterial districts have been replaced by corresponding district and local municipalities, thereby conforming more to standards laid down by the Department of Provincial and Local Government and the Municipal Demarcation Board;
- (c) The mapping (geographic information system (GIS)) component has been migrated to the .NET environment, which drastically reduces downtime of the system. The navigational tools of GIS have also been enhanced;
- (d) The uploading, editing and display of scanned copies of the relevant pages of the Gazetteer, as part of the database;
- (e) The menu structure has been enhanced to improve the navigation of the system;

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\*\* Prepared by South Africa.



(f) Workflow which enables the user to track the progress of a name change;

(g) The heart of the South African Geographical Names System, the search functionality, has been improved to allow the user to filter records per location, feature type, etc.

Other major enhancements envisaged for the South African Geographical Names System include the following:

(a) A pronunciation facility to enable the Department of Arts and Culture to record, manage and store the correct pronunciation of place names;

(b) Addition of more GIS data and ability of users to perform spatial reporting on the system;

(c) The addition of statistical and demographic information of place names.

The site may be found at the following address: <http://sagns.dac.gov.za/>.

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