



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
26 June 2007

Original: English

Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

New York, 21-30 August 2007

Item 9 (d) of the provisional agenda*

National standardization: administrative structure of national names authorities

Nationwide hearings

Submitted by South Africa**

The three-year term of the South African Geographical Names Council, a national body, expired in March 2006. The Minister of Arts and Culture has extended its term, which is to expire once he has appointed the new Council. The Department is re-advertising the nomination process as it felt that the response to the first advertisement had been poor in light of the massive public interest generated by the process of name change in South Africa.

The format envisaged is a two-day summit in each province where the provincial arts and culture leadership together with the Provincial Geographical Names Council and its provincial committee will explain clearly the procedures that need to be followed in changing names including the government mandate to bring about transformation in the cultural and heritage sector.

All the municipalities in the province will be requested to provide a list of the names that they suggest should be changed. This should be accompanied by a well-researched basis for such recommendations.

Political entities, labour organizations, traditional leadership, and affected and interested cultural entities will be allowed to air their views and make recommendations on the second day of each provincial summit.

The national Geographical Names Council will collate the list of all suggested names, and carry out more research on the origin of each name. The suggested names will be then subjected to the rigorous process of consultation as spelled out in the procedure manual of the South African Geographical Names Council. It is envisaged that this exercise will be concluded within 18 months.

* E/CONF.98/1.

** Prepared by South Africa.

