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National standardization: treatment of names in multilingual areas

Pretoria/Tshwane city name change

Submitted by South Africa**

In August 2003, the Executive Mayor of Tshwane, Metro Council Father Smangalisso Mkhathshwa, appointed a Task Team to look into the possibility of a “name change” from “Pretoria” to “Tshwane”. The Task Team was to be appointed for six months but owing to public interest, its term was extended by seven months. On 8 October 2004, the Task Team presented the final report to the Executive Mayor of Tshwane. On 7 March 2005, a Special Council meeting was held to discuss, among other things, the report on the possible name change of “Pretoria” to “Tshwane”. The meeting took a resolution to start necessary administrative processes to effect the name change.

On 6 and 7 April 2005, *Pretoria News* placed an advertisement on the Tshwane Metro Council resolution calling for public comments. The *Beeld* placed a similar advertisement in Afrikaans on 6 April 2005. Subsequently, all administrative processes (as per the guidelines of the South African Geographical Names Council) were followed by Tshwane Metro to implement the name change.

The South African Geographical Names Council also received a number of pieces of correspondence from different organizations and individuals. Among them were the Democratic Alliance, Freedom Front Plus, Pretoria Civil Action, which comprises the trade union Solidarity, the Gauteng North Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Organizations, as well as various other organizations, and individuals who were campaigning for the preservation of the name “Pretoria”.

The SAGNC went through all the information presented to it and recommended that the Minister approve the name. The Minister has not yet taken a decision on the matter.

* E/CONF.98/1.

** Prepared by South Africa.

