



UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

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UNEGGN website:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo>

U N G E G N

I N F O R M A T I O N

B U L L E T I N

(FORMERLY NEWSLETTER)

The *Information Bulletin of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names* (formerly UNGEGN Newsletter) is issued approximately twice a year by the Secretariat of the Group. The Secretariat is established within the Statistics Division (UNSD), Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Secretariat of the United Nations. It publishes contributions/reports from the Experts of the Group, its Linguistic/Geographical Divisions and its Working Groups. Contributions for the Information Bulletin can only be considered when they are made available in digital form. They

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Preface

Message from the Chairperson

Dear Colleagues

Since the 25th Session of UNGEGN in Nairobi in May 2009, various geographical names activities have been undertaken by UNGEGN Working Groups and Divisions, and within countries. Some are reported in this edition of the *Bulletin*. We have also been working with the UNGEGN Secretariat to facilitate a number of projects, including:

- launch of the UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database;
- design and printing of a cover for UNGEGN publicity information;
- updating the UNGEGN website;
- liaison with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA);
- participation of UNGEGN in the UN Global Geographic Information Management initiative of the UN Statistics Division; and
- planning for the 26th UNGEGN Session in Europe in 2011.

Launch of the UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database

On December 17, 2009 the database became available to the public through the web (see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/geonames/>). I wish to thank convenors and members of the Working Groups on Country Names and on Romanization Systems, as well as experts from many countries, and staff of the UN Statistics Division for their hard work to make this initiative a reality!

Although we have a fairly comprehensive coverage of country names (as endonyms and in languages of the UN) and capital cities, we

have not yet gathered city/town data from all countries around the world. Please check the data for your country! Authorized data for cities/towns with a population of over 100,000 should be sent as an Excel file including:

1. Endonym (If more than one name is approved for a place, each should be provided, with the language to which each applies and their relative status for international use.)
 - 1.1 If appropriate, please include:
 - (a) the romanized form, and
 - (b) the romanization system used;
2. Latitude and longitude coordinates in decimal degrees.

In addition, we have the capability to include individual pronunciation files for the populated place endonyms (.wav files). Sound files can be sent at any time, with separate .wav files for each city/town.

Please help us make this database as complete and useful as possible! Please also use the database and let others know of its existence.

New cover for UNGEGN publicity information

An attractive new cover suitable for distributing UNGEGN documents has been printed. Its design allows it to be used to include brochures and information sheets in any of the six UN languages. During the coming months the Working Group on Publicity and Funding will be developing further publicity material for inclusion in the new folders.

Updating the UNGEGN website

During the last few months, we have received assistance from the UNGEGN Secretariat to make many updates and additions to the UNGEGN website, to keep the material accurate and useful. You will see that a world map can now be used to access country information on national names authorities, interactive databases and toponymic guidelines (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/Country_links/map.htm). In addition, we have started a new section to provide examples of useful documents relevant to the work of names authorities (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/nat_names_auth.htm). These are ongoing activities and your corrections and new data are always welcome. During 2010, it is planned to increase the web access to .pdf files of documents presented at earlier Conferences and UNGEGN Sessions. Please let us know your thoughts for further developing the UNGEGN website.

Liaison with UNECA

At the UNGEGN Session in Nairobi, the UNECA office presented the Africa Gazetteer database project that they have been developing. We are pleased that this initiative continues, and was demonstrated at the Statistical Commission for Africa II, held in Addis Ababa in January. The Commission encouraged ECA to work with UNGEGN to prepare a plan that will lead to authoritative national databases, which can be fed into continental and global geographical names databases. Countries of Africa are encouraged to contact UNECA to keep in touch with the possibilities the Africa Gazetteer project has to offer. A report on this project is included in this *Bulletin*.

UN Global Geographic Information Management (GGIM) initiative

During the past six months, the UN Statistics

Division has been actively engaged in an initiative to provide a forum for an integrated approach to global geographic information management, incorporating statistics, mapping and charting, GIS and geographical names. The participation of UNGEGN in this development should provide us with the opportunity to indicate the significant nature of including standardized geographical names in this important basic geo-referenced global framework. During the coming months documentation will be developed for submission to ECOSOC and plans will be made for a global forum, possibly as soon as late 2011. Further details on GGIM are included in this *Bulletin*.

Planning for the 26th UNGEGN Session in 2011

ECOSOC has given the formal mandate for UNGEGN to meet in the second quarter of 2011, in either Geneva or Vienna. The Secretariat is now making the arrangements and, to fit with other events on the calendar, will be proposing the third week of May for the 26th Session.

As we discussed in Nairobi, there is a proposal that UNGEGN should meet for five consecutive days (rather than six days over two weeks). As I realize this is a controversial question, I gathered comments from the UNGEGN Bureau and Convenors and Rapporteurs of Working Groups, who bear considerable responsibility for the successful running of the Session. The decision has been made to work with the UN Statistics Division to run this UNGEGN Session in one week, as is done by other UN groups. We hope that shortening the time, and therefore the costs, will help experts from more countries to participate. To achieve as much as possible from the Session we shall have to be creative, perhaps, for example, using some of the following thoughts: focus attention of agenda items on some particular common issues in association

with special presentations; some papers become “for information only”; some groups of papers are summarized collectively; we have to further streamline our reporting; and we have to take full advantage of time slots before and after formal sessions, as well as lunch time for smaller group meetings and workshops.

Although some problems have been cited with this shorter session, we have received a number of useful ideas aimed to make the Session more effective, for example:

- present papers only on topics that need general discussion
- present one or two papers for each working group
- “Information papers” (e.g. those of Divisions/Countries) only be mentioned, with time for questions
- early deadline for papers to enable optimum preparation
- groups of papers be summarized
- more time for special presentations and discussion
- more “problem-oriented” approach
- continued emphasis on needs of developing countries

- exclude some coffee breaks
- major reason to attend should be “gaining insight”, rather than presenting a paper
- more work should be done by Divisions ahead of time
- all Working Group rapporteurs assigned and prepared ahead of time

Such approaches will be discussed further and I welcome suggestions from all experts to help us organize the 26th Session to achieve the optimum benefits for participants and to meet the objectives of UNGEGN. We also realize that the UNGEGN Secretariat will be aiming to keep to an absolute minimum the distribution of documents at the Session.

We look forward to hearing your news and views during the coming year.

Helen Kerfoot
Chair, UNGEGN
(Ottawa, Canada)
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News from Secretariat

Dear UNGEGN Experts,

The 26th session of UNGEGN

The twenty-sixth session of UNGEGN will be held from 16 to 20 May 2011 either at the United Nations Office at Geneva or at the United Nations Office in Vienna, to facilitate and prepare the work of the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names to be held in 2012. The exact venue for the session will be posted on the UNGEGN website, with useful information on hotels, transport and the like in due course.

At the twenty-fifth session of UNGEGN in Nairobi, the UNGEGN Secretariat expressed its wish to reduce the amount of paper reproduction in future sessions. I would like to share with you that the Secretariat organized the 18th UN Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP), held in Bangkok from 26 to 29 October 2009 with minimum paper reproduction. Only limited numbers of discussion papers were made available to participants for reference purpose in the Conference room. Country reports were not reproduced. The experts attending the UNRCC-AP appreciated the effort and the meeting was conducted without a problem. UNSD is convinced that a paper-less meeting is feasible and we will do so at the twenty-sixth session of UNGEGN.

The UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database

The Secretariat has continued to support the work of the experts. The UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database is now publicly available and can be accessed from the UNGEGN home page (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/>) and also for a short time from the UN Statistics Division home page (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>).

The project is truly a team effort and the Database is now a reality. This was made possible by the hard work of the Chair of UNGEGN, the Working Group on Country Names and the Working Group on Romanization Systems, experts who have provided review comments on the test site, and UN Statistics Division staff members.

Further detail on the Database is given in the section following this under the title “The UNGEGN Geographical Names Database: an update”.

UNEGN and UN Regional Cartographic Conferences

The Secretariat also provides support for two regional cartographic conferences: the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas and the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific. The UNGEGN Secretariat is continuing to forge ties with the UN Regional Cartographic Conferences, in recognition that cartography, GIS and Geographical Names

are crucial to the promotion of geographic information.

Global Geographic Information Management

UNSD, jointly with the UN Cartographic Section, convened the first Preparatory Meeting on Global Geographic Information Management in Bangkok, on Sunday 25 October 2009, one day before the 18th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP). Geographic information experts from 14 countries and 7 regional and international organizations attended the meeting and discussed the proposal of a global inter-governmental mechanism to coordinate the various activities on global geographic information management. At the 18th UNRCC-AP and the 41st session of the UN Statistical Commission, the issue of global geographic information management was discussed.

At these two inter-governmental meetings, UNSD was requested to initiate discussion and prepare a report, for the approval of ECOSOC on global coordination of geographic information management, including the consideration of a possible creation of a United Nations global forum for the exchange of information among countries and other interested parties, and particularly for sharing best practices in legal and policy instruments, institutional management models, technical solutions and standards, interoperability of systems and data, and sharing mechanisms that guarantee that geographic

information and services are easily and timely accessible.

Important documents related to the GGIM are:

- report of the 18th UNRCC-AP, in particular, paragraphs 44 – 50, and Chapter IV: Resolutions adopted by the Conference; Item 7- Global geographic information management, pp. 16-17. (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/METHODS/CAR-TOG/Asia_and_Pacific/18/Report/English.pdf)
- Report of the 41st session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/sc2010.htm>)
- E/CN.3/2010/13 - Report of National Statistical and Geographical Institute of Brazil on Global Geographic Information Management (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/sc2010.htm>)

Finally, I would like to thank those who contributed to this *Bulletin*. The next Information Bulletin will be issued in late 2010.

Yacob Zewoldi

UNGEEN Secretariat

United Nations Statistics Division

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The UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database: an update

What is the full name of Egypt in Arabic or English?

How is the capital of Ukraine written in Ukrainian or used in Spanish?

What is the capital of Burkina Faso and how is it pronounced?

What are the coordinates of Recife in Brazil?

To provide answers to such questions, a multi-lingual, multiscriptural geo-referenced geographical names database is now available online and can be viewed at

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/geonames/Default.aspx>.

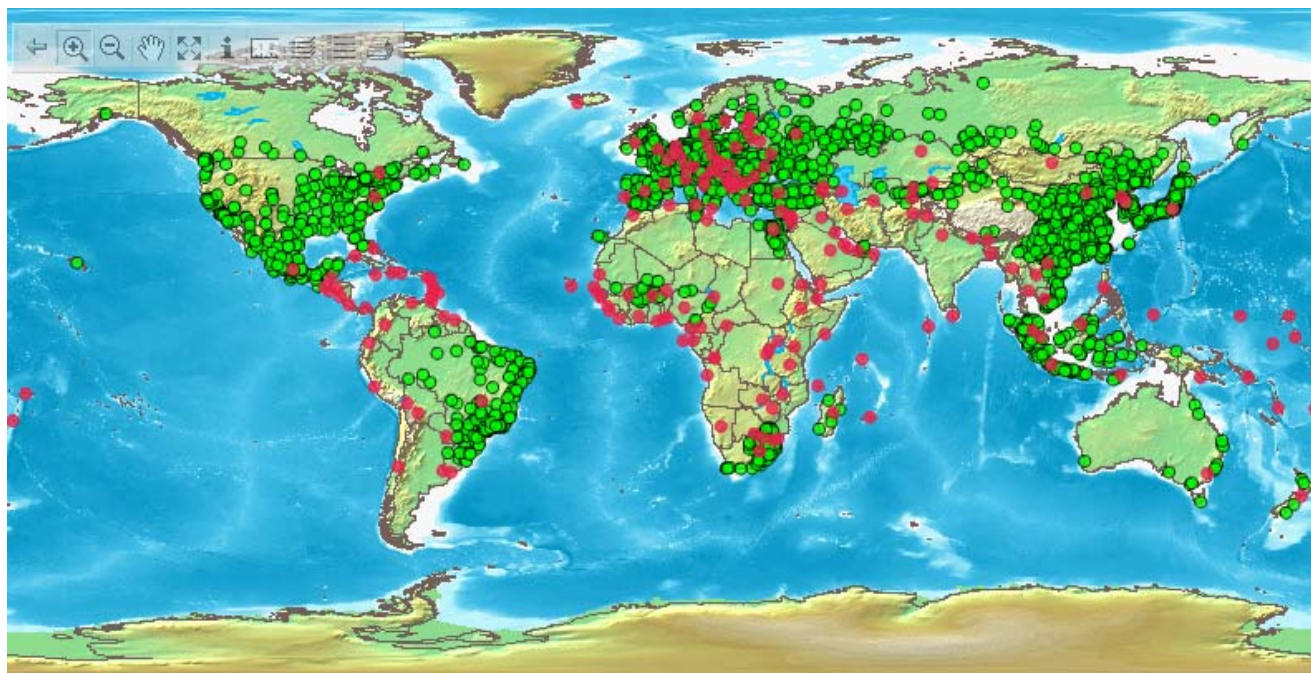
Through this web interface, users can access short and full names of the 192 United Nations member states, their capitals, and the major cities (population over 100,000) for

many countries. Authoritative city endonyms are provided mainly by national name authorities and sound files are being added to assist users with pronunciation. At this stage, the

database contains nearly 2,600 country names, some 4,100 names for 2,970 cities, with more than 600 audio files. As a useful reference tool for geo-information management, the UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database will continue to be developed and improved, and updated on an ongoing basis.

You are invited to provide us with your feedback using the online form. Database updates are scheduled monthly providing additional information and correcting existing information.

For further information please contact:
geoinfo_unsd@un.org.



From the Divisions

Dutch- and German-speaking Division

24th DGSD Meeting, Tainach (Austria), 28th April, 2010

The 24th Meeting of DGSD will take place in conjunction with the 10th Meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms, 28th April, 2010, 8 p.m., in Tainach, Carinthia, Austria (for travel information and registration see under Working Group on Exonyms). Main items of the Meeting will be the preparation of a next GeoNames symposium on the topic of place name changes, other common DGSD activities and goals for the next UNGEGN Session and UNCSGN as well as handing over the Division chair from Austria to Belgium.

For more information on our Division, please, visit our new website <http://141.74.33.52/dgsd/>

Peter Jordan

Chair of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division

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Latin America Division

Reunión de la División de América Latina

En el marco de la 24 Conferencia Cartográfica Internacional, celebrada en Santiago de Chile, del 15 al 21 de noviembre de 2009, representantes de Argentina, Chile, México, España y República Dominicana realizaron una sesión de trabajo de la División de América Latina del Grupo de Expertos de las Naciones Unidas.

Los Nombres Geográficos, su captación en campo, tratamiento en gabinete y publicación, así como la creación de las Autoridades Nacionales fueron comentados por cada uno de los representantes de los países ahí presentes, se intercambiaron experiencias y resultados obtenidos. La Presidenta de la División, también les comentó sobre el portal WEB de la Divi

sión de América Latina (<http://www.genung-dal.org.mx>) mismo que se puso a su disposición.

Se invitó a colaborar con los programas del Grupo de Expertos, principalmente en la contribución a la Base de Datos de Nombres Geográficos del UNGEGN.

Latin America Division Meeting (original in Spanish)

Within the framework of the 24th International Cartographic Conference, held in Santiago, Chile, from 15 to 21 November 2009, representatives of Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Spain and Dominican Republic held a work session of the Latin America Division of UNGEGN.

Geographical names, issues of their field collection, treatment in the office and publication of geographical names, as well as the creation of the national authorities were commented on by each of the representatives of the countries

present. Experiences and results obtained were exchanged.

The Chair of the Division noted that the Latin America Division has information available on the Division website (<http://www.genung-dal.org.mx>). She invited participants to collaborate with programmes of the Group of Experts, and to contribute to the UNGEGN geographical names database.



Participants from UNGEGN's Latin America Division at the ICA Conference in Santiago, Chile, November 2009. From left to right: Susana Rodriguez Ramos (Mexico) - Division Chair; Adriana Vescovo (Argentina); Juan Arias (Dominican Republic); Jacqueline Henriquez Campusano (Dominican Republic); Victoria Aguirre Bravo (Chile).



Homepage of the Latin America Division - <http://www.genung-dal.org.mx>.

Susana Rodriguez Ramos
Chair, Latin America Division
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Norden Division

Norden Division Meeting

The next Norden Division Meeting will be held in Uppsala on October 29th 2010, in conjunction with a symposium and meetings between the UNGEGN Working Group on Terminology and the ICOS Terminology Group October 27th–29th. The formal announcement will come later this spring.

The provisional agenda for the entire arrangement is as follows:

- October 27th: Meeting in UNGEGN's Working Group on Toponymic Terminology
- October 28th: Symposium with international and Nordic guests
- October 29th: Parallel meetings with the Norden Division and the ICOS Terminology Group

We look forward to meeting with colleagues and friends in Uppsala in the autumn.

Centenary of the Danish Place-Names Commission

The Danish Place-Names Commission will be celebrating its centenary in October this year, and a number of arrangements have been

planned as part of the celebration. There will be a series of seminars covering topics central to the work of the Place-Names Commission, and a publication is planned for the occasion. A new Place-Names Commission website, www.stednavneudvalget.ku.dk, will be listing the planned activities. The website is, as I write, still under construction but it will be published shortly.

New website: Names of countries in seven languages

We are pleased to announce the arrival of a new website published by the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland with the names of all independent states of the world in seven languages: Finnish, Swedish, North Saami, English, French, German and Russian (see <http://kaino.kotus.fi/maidennimet/>). This website was published on October 21st 2009 and is maintained by onomastic experts at the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland.

Peder Gammeltoft

Chair, Norden Division

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From the Working Groups

Working Group on Exonyms

10th Meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms, 28-30 April 2010

Although registration is still possible up to the end of February, many UNGEGN and other names experts from all continents have already registered. So far (as of 8 February) according to the three main topics (1) name/language/feature relation with transboundary features, (2) guidelines for the use of exonyms, (3) practice, policies and trends of exonym use in various countries, the following papers have been announced (in alphabetical order of the presenters):

BELL, Herman (Sudan): Nubian geographical names on both sides of an international border
CHOO, Sungjoe (Republic of Korea): The name of sea as transboundary feature
DORION, Henri (Canada): Policies and practice of exonym use in a bilingual context
JAILLARD, Pierre (France): Que normaliser en toponymie, pourquoi et comment?
JORDAN, Peter (Austria): The endonym – Name from within a social/cultural group - “-”: Criteria for the use of exonyms – a next approach
KLADNIK, Drago, URBANC, Mimi (Slovenia): title not yet defined
MATTHEWS, Phil (New Zealand): Where exactly is the borderline between endonym and exonym?
ORIEBY, Eman (Egypt): Practice of exonym use on Egypt
ORMELING, Ferjan (Netherlands): Exonyms in the EGN names service
PÄLL, Peeter (Estonia): Conversion of scripts and exonyms
PAIKKALA, Sirkka (Finland): Practice, policies and trends of exonym use in Finland
SABBAR, Halim (Sudan): The toponymy of Ishkēd and the revitalisation of an endangered Nubian language

STANI-FERTL, Roman (Austria): The handling of cross-border features within the Euro-GeoNames database

WOODMAN, Paul (United Kingdom): Bilingual toponymy in Carinthia – observations from the outside

ZAGÓRSKI, Bogusław (Poland): Endonyms versus exonyms. Case study: names of Arab countries and their major cities

ZYCH, Maciej (Poland): Polish geographical names of undersea and Antarctic features - “-”: Polish list of geographical names of the World: Vol. 11. Europe, part 1

The meeting is open for all UNGEGN experts and not confined to members of the Working Group on Exonyms. It will take place in the Catholic Educational Centre “Sodalitas” (www.sodalitas.at) located in Tainach, east of Klagenfurt (Austria). The Centre has a guesthouse, where all participants can be accommodated and are provided with full board. Nearby Klagenfurt has an international airport (<http://www.klagenfurt-airport.com>) which is well connected with major European airports (London, Zürich, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Munich, Vienna). Klagenfurt is also the next major railway station with international connections. A pickup service on demand will be offered from the airport as well as from the railway station.

The price for accommodation and full board is € 55.- per night (This includes accommodation in a single bed room, breakfast, lunch, dinner). The price for accommodation and breakfast is € 37.- per night. There are no fees for participation.

Programme

Wednesday, 28th April 2010:

Bus excursion (starting at 9 a.m., the price of € 35.- includes lunch) on the theme “Carinthia – a bilingual region” with the following items: Visits to the traditional Slovene publishing house Hermagoras/ Mohorjeva in Klagenfurt: history, activities, projects; to the Slovene/German bilingual kindergarten attached to the publishing house; to the Slovene/German bilingual elementary school attached to the publishing house; downtown of Klagenfurt; visit to the church Maria Saal (in Slovene: Gospa Sveta) north of Klagenfurt: The current church, an outstanding architectural monument (Romanesque/Gothic style) within fortifications, is from the 15th century, but has predecessors down to the 8th century, when this place was the germ of re-Christianisation in this part of the Alps, at that time settled by a predominantly Slavonic popu-

lation. Up to the present day the church is also a place of pilgrimage for Slovenes.

Thursday, 29th and Friday, 30th April 2010, 9.00-12.30 and 14.00-17.30

10th Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Paper presentations and discussions

For more details and registration, please address peter.jordan@oeaw.ac.at

Peter Jordan

Co-convenor, Working Group on Exonyms
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(Registration information is available on the UNGEGN website at
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/2nd%20Circular,%2010th%20Meeting%20WGE.doc>)

Working Group on Romanization Systems

Cooperation with ICANN

During the Nairobi session in 2009 there was a discussion of a proposal by ICANN, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, for cooperation with UNGEGN in certain fields. One of such areas of interest was the new initiative of ICANN in allowing non-Roman scripts as TLD names (see <http://www.icann.org/> for more information). At the Nairobi session it was decided that the Working Group on Romanization Systems act as an expert body in cases where third-party assistance is needed in applying for new non-Roman-script country-code Internationalized Domain Names. It is envisaged that the applying countries themselves would provide for the necessary linguistic and/or toponymic expertise in preparing their applications but if

needed they could turn to international experts, and the Working Group could then assist. During the summer there was cooperation with Mr. Bernard Turcotte from ICANN to provide guidelines for such applications, which was then approved by ICANN at their Seoul meeting. Starting from November 2009 the so-called Fast Track Process is officially open and the Working Group is ready to assist if needed. Thus far it has not been necessary.

Romanization of Ukrainian

It has been reported that the Ukrainian Government approved on January 27, 2010 new rules for the romanization of Ukrainian. The rules will apply both to personal names and geographical names, and thus have the per-

spective to become universally applied in Ukraine. When compared to the earlier system (1996) there are two major changes:

- (1) the character ш is now rendered shch (not sch),
- (2) the soft sign (ь) is not rendered at all.

The Working Group will study the new system and monitor its implementation.

Peeter Päll

Convenor, Working Group on Romanization Systems

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Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Revision of Scope of work and Work plan

At the Working Group meeting in Nairobi in May 2009 it was proposed to revise the Working Group objectives, i.e. the “scope of work” and the “work plan”. According to this task the Working Group has elaborated and agreed upon a revision and requested the UNGEGN secretariat to update the text on the UNGEGN website

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegnwgroups.htm#WGtopo>).

The updates reflect the former texts on the UNGEGN website as well as the UN resolutions relevant to the Working Group and Working Group decisions made in the past.

Update of the Working Group website

The information on the Working Group website has been regularly updated (last update February 2010). Amongst others, the aforementioned updates on “scope of work” and “work plan” are available, as well as a new folder called “SDI announcements”, which includes some links and newsletters in the context of SDIs. The information is available through:

http://www.zrc-sazu.si/ungegn/WG_TDFG/gazetteers.htm

Liaison with ISO TC 211 and contact with Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC)

The Convenor is currently mentioned as liaison member for the ISO TC 211 as well as an observer for the OGC Standards Working Group which has been established in 2008 to elaborate further the Gazetteer profile of a web feature service (WFS). The ISO TC 211 Secretariat frequently disseminates document notifications, which are – for the time being – of general interest to GI experts rather than addressed to toponymy issues. The OGC Standards Working Group is currently “inactive”. However, the Convenor has encouraged all Working Group members to sign in as observers, because this issue – if the standardization process will be continued – is of high relevance to the Working Group. For information about the Terms & Conditions please visit

<http://www.opengeospatial.org/projects/group/s/wfsgaz1.0swg>

Participation at the 10th United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG), 19 - 21 October 2009 in Bonn, Germany

The Convenor participated at the 10th UNGIWG Meeting (19 - 21 October 2009) in Bonn, Germany. UNGIWG brings together professionals in the fields of cartography and

geo information sciences within the United Nations system in order to facilitate inter-agency cooperation and coordination. Members of UNGIWG consist of departments, specialized agencies, programmes, organs or offices of the UN system. Non-members can participate by invitation of the chair. UNGIWG operates by consensus and functions in a task-driven, goal-oriented and flexible manner as a network of professionals. Plenary Meetings are held once a year (<http://www.ungiwg.org>). Compared to UNGEGN (considered as a formal Expert Group), UNGIWG is considered as an “informal working group”.

At the 10th UNGIWG Meeting about 60 participants from about 15 (of the 30 registered) UN agencies and some observers (e.g. from Google, OpenStreetMap, ESRI, OGC) were present.

The meeting revealed that UN agencies have to deal with similar issues and problems in the context of SDI within their “in-house” UNSDI initiative. The notes of the Working Group

Convenor about the 10th UNGIWG Plenary Session are available through the Group web site: http://www.zrc-sazu.si/ungegn/WG_TDFG/gazetteers.htm

Next meeting of the Working Group in 2011

The location and venue for the next Working Group meeting have not yet been determined. Most probably the Group will accept the kind invitation by the member from Croatia to have the next Working Group meeting in Zagreb, Croatia, in February 2011. It will be arranged in conjunction with at least the meeting of the East Central and South-East Europe Division and, very likely, with a workshop of the EuroGeoNames community. More details will be communicated in due course.

Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu

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Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

A meeting with the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) Terminology Group was arranged in Vienna, Austria, on December 12th 2009. As Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Toponymic Terminology I was invited to join the meeting. After some short scientific statements (one by me) the venue was organized as a workshop with very free and spontaneous discussions. We systematically went through the ICOS terminology list from *allonym* onwards, compared all the shared terms with the UNGEGN glossary and discussed in depth their meanings and definitions. This was of course very beneficial

for the new and emerging ICOS list but also in the UNGEGN glossary some changes and corrections obviously must be done.

A meeting with the UNGEGN Working Group will be arranged in Uppsala, Sweden, on October 27th 2010. For further information, see the Norden Division report in this Bulletin.

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Task Team for Africa

Activité du Task Team for Africa

Poursuivants ses efforts pour la promotion de la normalisation des noms géographiques en Afrique, le Task Team for Africa et le Groupe de travail sur la Formation du GENUNG, envisagent d'organiser un stage de formation au profit des pays de l'Afrique Centrale au courant de cette année. Ce stage qui se déroulera à Yaoundé au Cameroun est organisé en collaboration avec l'Institut de Cartographie de ce pays. Il est à noter que ce stage fait suite aux autres stages tenus respectivement à Tunis en 2006, au profit des pays d'Afrique du Nord, à Ouagadougou en 2008, au profit des pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest et enfin à Nairobi en 2009, au profit des pays d'Afrique de l'Est.

Par ailleurs, sur un autre plan et étant donné que plus de 7 pays arabes appartiennent au continent africain, le Task Team, saisira sa présence lors de la tenue de la réunion de la

Division arabe du GENUNG prévue à Beyrouth en mai prochain, pour initier une coopération d'échange et d'entraide, avec ce dernier.

Il est à signaler également que le Task Team for Africa est partie prenante dans le projet « Afriterre » et Africa Gazetteer.

Le Task Team continuera à ne ménagera aucun effort pour participer à la sensibilisation des autorités africaines pour les bienfaits de la normalisation des noms géographiques qui sont un facteur important participant au développement du continent.

Brahim Atoui

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ECA to Launch Programme on Geographical Names

The second session of the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) has urged the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to:

... prepare a work programme, in collaboration with United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) that will lead to authoritative national databases, which will be consolidated into a continental database and feed into the global geographical names database.

This recommendation resulted from the work of the Working Group on Data Management, where ECA presented the prototype of a software tool that will facilitate the collecting and

validating of geographical names. It is envisaged that the availability of such a tool will motivate African countries to revitalise their geographical names authorities, or establish them where none existed before. While the tool will be platform independent and feature loaded, the work programme will also place emphasis on the non-technical issues and processes for approving geographical names. It will therefore include raising awareness on the need for functional geographical names bodies, organising consultative meetings of stakeholders, encouraging member States to get fully involved in the global work on geo

graphical names and assisting them to adopt or develop national guidelines and standards.

Dozie Ezigbalike

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Afriterra – The Cartographic Free Library (www.afriterra.org/)

The AFRITERRA Foundation is a non-profit Cartographic Library and Archive assembling and preserving the original rare maps of Africa in a definitive place for education and interpretation. We view cartography as a medium that uniquely links art, technology, and history. The Afriterra library is the most complete assembly in North America for original rare maps focused on early Africa.

Some facts about the collection:

- 5,000 *original* rare maps, engravings, archive papers and rare book text and references, covering seven languages (English, Latin, Dutch, French, German, Portuguese, and Italian).
- Dates of origin from 1480 to 1900.
- Palm-size to wall-size; small regional scale to continental scale
- Maps of mountains, deserts, scenes, villages, and pathways.
- Maps of Rivers: Gambia, Senegal, Niger, Congo, Orange, Zambezi, and Nile.
- Maps and Description of Regions: Gambia, Senegal, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Ivory Coast, Slave Coast, Grain Coast, Cameroon, Zaire, Angola, South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Nubia, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Timbuktu.
- Locations of Kingdoms: Songhay, Asante, Dahomey, Oyo, Jolof, Dyula, Benin, Ife, Gao, Mali, Aja, Kong, Abrong, Mossi, Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Vili, Borno, Akan, Ghana, Ewe, Dagomba, Kasanje, Tuareg, Sahel, Mbundu, Zulu.
- Locations of Slave trade sites: Arguin, Goree, St. Louis, De los, Sherbro, Bance, Whydah, Elmina, Anomabe, Lagos, Bonny, Calabar, Biafra, Benguela,

Loango, Cabinda, Luanda, St. Thomas, Fernando Po.

Our online searchable database of the maps in the Afriterra collection is now available.

Along with raw data about the maps, a new set of high-resolution scans has begun. The digitization of 1000 maps is funded and has progressed beyond the half-way mark. You can access the catalog at

<http://catalog.afriterra.org/home.cmd>. It represents the first phase of the Afriterra Digital Initiative, a broad vision that seeks to use technology to provide universal open access to the material in our collection as well as a collaborative environment in which to share knowledge.

Afriterra, being a privately funded non-profit institution, is always interested in learning about potential partnering and funding opportunities, as welcoming any questions about the Afriterra foundation, library, and website.

One area of collaboration could be the verification of present-day geographical names and their past (or alternative) forms. UNGEGN experts in Africa are invited to contact Afriterra if they are interested in verifying, validating and helping to improve the metadata on geographical names to make the map search capabilities better for your country.

Please contact:

Ms. Lucia Lovison-Golob

Project Director/Librarian

Email: lovison@afriterra.org

Coming soon

UN-SPIDER Regional Workshop: "Building Upon Regional Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response for Africa"

Organized by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, with United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25 - 28 May 2010

Contact: **Michael Leitgab**

E-mail: michael.leitgab@unoosa.org

<http://www.un-spider.org/workshop-addis-2010>

Cuba

La normalización de los nombres geográficos en Cuba

El próximo 15 de mayo se conmemora el trigésimo aniversario de la creación de la Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos de Cuba (CNNG), establecida y respaldada por el DECRETO No 67 del 15 de mayo de 1980. Desde entonces en la misma se viene realizando un trabajo sistemático encaminado a recopilar, estudiar y normalizar todo el patrimonio toponímico de nuestro país.

En la comisión se ha logrado consolidar y estabilizar un trabajo cooperativo durante estos 30 años entre los representantes de los diferentes organismos que la integran, alcanzándose resultados concretos que ilustran el cumplimiento de las funciones de la CNNG.

El beneficio práctico de los nombres geográficos ha abarcado, desde los inicios del trabajo de esta comisión, un sin número de actividades de vital importancia para el desarrollo económico, cultural y social de nuestro país. De tal forma, los resultados del trabajo de la Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográfico se ven reflejados, por ejemplo, en el uso del universo de topónimos normalizados en tareas relacionadas con el censo de población y viviendas, en la educación, en los ajustes de la división político-administrativa y en todas las bases cartográficas que se crean en el archipiélago cubano lo que responde a diversos intereses, ya sean económicos, educacionales o de otra índole.

La toponomástica como otras ciencias, ocupa un lugar eminente en la cultura cubana. Desde 1914 cuando se fundó la

Sociedad Geográfica de Cuba “en los habitantes de este Archipiélago”, como ha indicado la prestigiosa geógrafa Sarah E. Ysalgue, “había aparecido una conciencia geográfica”. Esta conciencia hoy es parte de las investigaciones toponímicas, así como de nuestra identidad cultural y constituye, además, un soporte de la concepción socialista del desarrollo y defensa de nuestro patrimonio toponímico.

Actualmente el desarrollo económico y social de Cuba atraviesa un conjunto de retos y circunstancias que demandan la adopción de nuevos esquemas y paradigmas asociados a los desafíos actuales de la cartografía y al desarrollo sostenible. Uno de estos desafíos, consiste en el aprovechamiento y explotación al máximo de la información geográfica disponible en materia de toponimia, por lo indispensable que resulta para conseguir bases cartográficas fidedignas en su contenido toponímico, que posibiliten mostrar escenarios confiables de los principales fenómenos económicos y sociales.

Todas estas consideraciones dan respuestas a los problemas económicos, sociales y ambientales que la geografía, como disciplina multidisciplinaria e integradora, podría resolver, puesto que un pilar importante en el acercamiento reflexivo entre el hombre y la naturaleza corresponde al estudio y conocimiento de los nombres geográficos.

Todas estas consideraciones dan respuesta a los problemas económicos, sociales y ambientales, que solo la Geografía como única disciplina multidisciplinaria e integradora puede resolver, y un pilar importante en este acercamiento re

flexivo entre el hombre y la naturaleza corresponde al estudio y conocimiento de los Nombres Geográficos.

Además de las modificaciones realizadas a los documentos legales que respaldan el trabajo de la CNNG, tanto los Grupos Técnicos Asesores como los Grupos de Trabajo en que está dividida la comisión para el mejor desempeño de sus funciones, han desarrollado desde su creación, a partir de las ideas básicas emanadas del Grupo de Expertos de Naciones Unidas, numerosas tareas, entre ellas se pudieran destacar las siguientes:

- Preparación de los documentos legales que rigen el trabajo de la Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos de Cuba.
- Confección de los textos de carácter metodológico que garanticen el desarrollo de las tareas de normalización de los nombres geográficos.
- Elaboración de normas cubanas que sirvan de apoyo al trabajo de la CNNG.
- Normalización de topónimos de los principales accidentes geográficos del territorio nacional.
- Realización de un Inventario Toponímico Municipal, lo que nos ha permitido disponer del universo toponímico recogido en las cartas topográficas a escala 1: 25000
- Preparación y edición del Diccionario Geográfico de Cuba. (Año 2000)
- Preparación y edición del Nomenclátor de Nombres Geográficos Normalizados de Cuba. (Año 2000)
- Preparación y edición de mapas toponímicos de Cuba, Centroamérica y El mundo. (Año 2000)
- Edición sistemática del Boletín Informativo, publicación de la Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos con el objetivo de divulgar los resultados de nuestro trabajo.(1998-2006)
- Presentación, aprobación y realización de un Proyecto Nacional de Investigaciones Toponímicas con el objetivo de impulsar el desarrollo de la actividad de nombres geográficos.
- Preparación de una Software de base de datos y sistemas de información que posibilitan el ágil manejo de toda la información toponímica disponible introducida en estos.
- Desarrollo de talleres provinciales y regionales de nombres geográficos dirigidos a intercambiar experiencias sobre la actividad de nombres geográficos y su desempeño en los diferentes territorios del país.
- Elaboración de indicaciones metodológicas para el desarrollo de las investigaciones de nombres geográficos nacionales y extranjeros.
- Desarrollo sistemático de investigaciones toponímicas por parte de los Grupos Técnicos Asesores con vistas a la preparación de los Diccionarios Geográficos Provinciales.
- Informatización de todos los resultados de los trabajos que realiza la Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos, lo que permitirá agilizar y consolidar gradualmente el tratamiento de los nombres geográficos en todas las direcciones.
- Celebración periódica de reuniones de los presidentes de los Grupos Técnicos Asesores para analizar el trabajo realizado y las nuevas proyecciones, así como para intercambiar experiencias adquiridas en el trabajo de normalización de los nombres geográficos en los diferentes territorios del país.
- Incorporación de nuestro resultado más relevante, el Diccionario Geográfico de Cuba, a una página web, lo que ha constituido la primera aplicación de la incipiente Infraestructura de Datos Espaciales de la República de Cuba.
- La preparación, por cada una de las provincias del país, de sus respectivos mapas toponímicos, nomenclátors y diccionarios geográficos.
- El desarrollo de investigaciones toponímicas en cada uno de los municipios del país, lo que

nos ha permitido profundizar en el estudio de la toponimia cubana.

- El desarrollo de cursos televisivos sobre toponimia con el propósito de contribuir al enriquecimiento del acervo cultural de nuestro pueblo y a la vez a la divulgación de los resultados del trabajo de la CNNG.

La dedicación y el esmero con que fueron realizadas las tareas mencionadas han permitido alcanzar la consolidación del trabajo de la Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos y de sus Grupos Técnicos Asesores. Al mismo tiempo, significa un salto cualitativo y cuantitativo que nos permite contar hoy con más de 25000 topónimos para cuya normalización laboramos, tanto los Grupos Municipales, como los Grupos Técnicos Asesores provinciales y la Comisión Nacional. Ello garantiza el enriquecimiento sistemático de nuestro banco de información toponímica.

La política de trabajo desarrollada por la Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos de Cuba pretende estar en consonancia con los objetivos de trabajo que orienta el Grupo de Expertos de Naciones Unidas en materia de nombres geográficos.

Toda la información toponímica de que dispone la CNNG está en soporte digital y todos los datos que se derivan de las investigaciones que desarrollamos, se someten a un análisis adecuado cuyos resultados se presentan a la CNNG en soporte digital.

Lo anterior nos sitúa en condiciones de responder a los reclamos derivados de la VI Conferencia Cartográfica Regional de las Américas, muy particularmente a lo relacionado con la advertencia que se hace a muchos de los estados miembros de las Naciones Unidas que se enfrentan con la dificultad de diseñar infraestructuras de datos espaciales especialmente en formato digital.

No obstante, todavía nos queda mucho por andar para ofrecer en soporte digital todo el mosaico toponímico de la República de Cuba con la información correspondiente a las investigaciones que realizamos. En la actualidad trabajamos para obtener salidas gráficas en forma de mapas, tarea compleja que necesita tiempo para poder brindar una información completa y confiable.

Conseguir la salida gráfica con todo el universo toponímico de que disponemos nos permitirá brindar un mejor acceso para su uso, así como asociarla con informaciones de otras temáticas.

La Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos de Cuba 30 años después de iniciados sus trabajos se encuentra enfrascada en la preparación de su obra mayor el Diccionario Geográfico de Cuba actualizado y enriquecido que deberá ver la luz próximamente y donde pretendemos mostrar todo lo que hemos logrado hasta hoy en materia de normalización de nombres geográficos.

Grupos Técnicos Asesores: Son grupos adscritos a los Consejos de la Administración Provincial creados en cada provincia y en el municipio especial de Isla de la Juventud, en virtud del Acuerdo del 28 de julio de 1983 del Comité Ejecutivo del Consejo de Ministros, con el propósito de asesorar en materia de nombres geográficos a los órganos de gobierno provinciales.

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Presidente Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos
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Licenciado Rodulfo Domínguez Portillo
Secretario Ejecutivo Comisión Nacional de Nombres Geográficos

Special Projects and News Items

World Statistics Day 20-10-2010



On 20 October 2010, the World will celebrate the first World Statistics Day, to raise awareness of the many achievements of official statistics premised on the core values of service, integrity and professionalism.

Why a World Statistics Day?

The celebration of the World Statistics Day will acknowledge the service provided by the global statistical system at national and international level, and hope to help strengthen the awareness and trust of the public in official statistics. It serves as an advocacy tool to further support the work of statisticians across different settings, cultures, and domains.

What to expect?

On World Statistics Day, activities at national level will highlight the role of official statistics and the many achievements of the national statistical system. International, regional and sub-regional organizations will complement national activities with additional events.

For further information on 20-10-2010, please visit:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/wsd/Default.aspx>

For contributions by UNGEGN Experts to World Statistics Day, I suggest cooperating with your National Statistical Offices by

- Preparing promotional materials about the relation between standardizing geographical names and having better statistics – for instance, with posters using GIS on censuses, Health statistical projects, Emergency and disaster projects, Environment statistical GIS projects, Educa-

tion GIS statistical projects, Millennium development goals (MDG), etc.

- Preparing technical papers synthesizing the importance of standardizing geographical names for the World SDI (Spatial Data Infrastructure).

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International Hydrographic Organization General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) Sub-Committee on Undersea Features (SCUFN)

The GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Features (SCUFN) held its 22nd Meeting from 22-26 September 2009 at the headquarters of the Service Hydrographique and Océanographique de la Marine (SHOM) in Brest, France. SCUFN is chaired by Dr. Hans-Werner Schenke, Germany. Ms. Lisa Taylor, USA, was elected as Vice-Chair of the committee at this year's meeting. Membership includes experts from Argentina, Brazil, India, Japan, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russian Federation, and the USA. Ing. en Chef Michel Huet, International Hydrographic Bureau, serves as Secretary.

SCUFN was established to standardize the nomenclature of the undersea features named on GEBCO graphical and digital products, IHO small-scale international chart series (INT Charts), and on the International Oceanographic Commission (IOC) regional International Bathymetric Chart series. As such, the committee considers proposals submitted for inclusion in the GEBCO Gazetteer. The committee accepted 25 feature names at

this year's meeting. There was considerable discussion of some organizational and policy decisions, with consideration to continue at the next meeting. The development of a web-based map interface and online gazetteer is one of most promising activities of the committee. The completion of this project will institute a single geospatially-enabled database that is accessible to all Members and the Secretariat.

The 23rd SCUFN Meeting will be held 11-14 September 2010 in Callao, Peru.
SCUFN website: <http://www.iho-ohi.net/english/committees-wg/ircc/gebco/scufn.html>

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Note: The website of the International Hydrographic Organization (www.iho-ohi.net) includes a diagram providing an overview of the committees and working groups of the IHO.

Overview of national names authorities and procedures for standardizing geographical names

In the UNGEGN Information Bulletin #37, we provided a template for gathering an overview of information on national standardization of geographical names. Examples were provided from Estonia, Norway, and South Africa. For this issue of the *Bulletin*, we are pleased to include similar information from Egypt.

Egypt

Provided by Eng. Eman Ahmed Orieby
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CAPMAS, Cairo, January 2010

1. Summary of regulations, acts, etc.

Standardization of Administrative geographical names in Egypt is governed by:

- [Law No. 43 of 1979](#) of Local management system.
- [Law No. 14 of 1982](#) on the reorganization of the Academy of Arabic Language.
- [Decree No.2915 of 1964](#), which organizes the work of Central Agency For Public Mobilization And Statistics "CAPMAS" and considers it as the official source for providing information to all the state bodies, organizations, universities, research centers, and in the development and evaluation processes relevant to the information that can help them make informed decisions.

2. Responsible bodies

- President of Egypt (naming provinces)
- Prime Minister (naming districts, cities and suburbs)
- Governors (villages, streets, all governmental landmarks included in the province)
- CAPMAS (gathering names and disseminating them)

- Ministry of Interior (naming and identifying boundaries for sections, subsections)
- Academy of The Arabic Language (center specializing in Arabic language)
- Egyptian survey authority.

3. Process of authorization

- [Law No. 43 of 1979](#) of Local management system states that:

Article 1

- local government units are the provinces, districts and cities, suburbs and villages. Each one has its legal personality. The Decision of establishment of the units and the determination of its scope and changing their names and cancellation are defined as follows:
 - (a) provinces: Decision of the President of Egypt and may be maintained within a single city.
 - (b) districts and cities and suburbs: Decision of the Prime Minister after the approval of the Popular Council of the province.
 - (c) villages: Decision of the Governor on the proposal of the Popular Council of the districts and approval from the Popular Council of the province. *Refer to Fig 1.*

- [Law No. 14 of 1982](#)
Promulgating the Law on the reorganization of the Arabic Language Academy states that

Article 1:

- Arabic Language Academy is an independent scientific body, with legal personality which has financial and administrative independence, following Minister of Education, based in Cairo.

Article 2:

The Academy's objectives are:

- (a) maintaining the correctness of the Arabic language, and making it satisfy the demands of science, literature and arts, and be appropriate to the needs of the evolving life;
- (b) carrying out studies and research on the rules and grammar of the Arabic language and choosing simplified standard methods to facilitate dictating and writing;
- (c) studying the scientific, literary, artistic and cultural terms as well as the studying of foreign onomastic names, and work on unifying them among speakers of Arabic;
- (d) carrying out studies and research on all concerns of the development of Arabic language and arranging to publish them.
- (e) discussing what is the complex of issues relating to its earlier objectives.

- [Decree No.2915 of 1964](#) :
Which organizes the work of Central Agency For Public Mobilization and Statistics "CAPMAS" states that

Article 10:

- Any ministry, authority or agency or any individual, individuals in the government, public sector, or private sector may - through any of the publica-

tion media or mass media - publish any publications, results or statistical data or information from any source except from the reality of statistics of CAPMAS;

- The statistics that are not included in the programs of CAPMAS may not be published without an approval of CAPMAS.

Article 11:

- Each ministry, governorate, public authority and public institution shall create a department adjunct to CAPMAS titled "Central Statistical Department" in the ministry, governorate, public authority or public institution.

4. Storage and availability of authorized geographical names

- All official place names gathered by Central Agency for public mobilization and statistics (CAPMAS) used on variety of publications like administrative boundaries gazetteer, census data publications, official media, on maps, GIS systems, government's Data Warehouse, etc.

5. Use of authorized geographical names

Official geographical names are to be used by all official Egyptian bodies.

6. Availability of toponymic guidelines

There are variant toponymic guidelines available on official Mapping Agencies and GIS departments on government, dedicated for their use and not published for general use.

7. Relevant websites

- Central Agency for Public mobilization and statistics(CAPMAS)
<http://www.capmas.gov.eg>

- http://www.capmas.gov.eg/eng_ver/presidentialdegree.htm
- Administrative division gazetteer –Arabic <http://www.eip.gov.eg/DataDirectories/AdministrativeDivision.aspx>
- Egyptian survey Authority portal <http://www.portal.esa.gov.eg>
- Egyptian Geography Network <http://www.egn.gov.eg>
- Center of documentation Cultural and Natural heritage <http://beta.culnat.org/>
- Academy of The Arabic Language <http://www.arabicacademy.org.eg>
- Egyptian geography society <http://www.server2002.net/egs1/english.html>
- Memory of Egypt <http://modernegypt.bibalex.org/>
- Eternal Egypt <http://www.eternalegypt.org/>
- Archaeological map <http://beta.culnat.org/Programs/Archaeological%20Map/Application/Pages/Application.aspx>
- National Authority for Remote Sensing And Space Sciences www.narss.sci.eg

8. Contacts

- President of CAPMAS pres-capmas@capmas.gov.eg
- CAPMAS GIS Center capmas-gisc@capmas.gov.eg
- Academy Of Arabic Language acc@idsc.net.eg

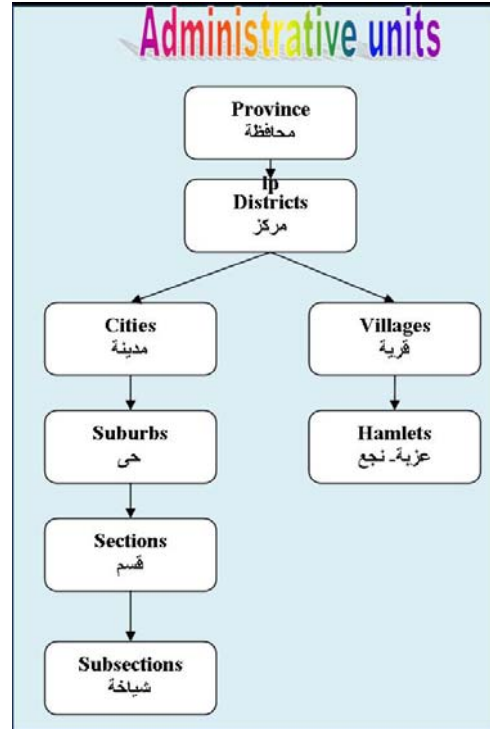


Fig. 1 Administrative units

Toponymic Research

UNGEGN has been encouraged to include in the Bulletin research material that relates to geographical names and their standardization. While this is seen as most useful to recipients of the Bulletin and a way for researchers to spread their knowledge for the assistance of UNGEGN experts, we must include a caveat. No formal review process has been initiated by the UNGEGN Secretariat or the UNGEGN Bureau for research articles, facts have not been verified and no editing process has been put in place; information included is solely the author's responsibility and does not reflect any position held by UNGEGN. Questions about the articles or their content should be directed to the authors.

Toponymic research (Africa)

The impact of colonial authorities on the existing place names in Namibia

1. Introduction

Namibia was first colonised by Germany from 1884 to 1914 and then by South Africa from 1915 to March 21, 1990 when she gained her independence. Both the South Afrikaners and the Germans renamed some places in the then South West Africa, but they retained the names of some places from indigenous languages as well. Names from local languages such as Otjiherero, Khoekohegowab and Oshiwambo appear to be semantically opaque, because they were not reduced to writing correctly. This incorrect spelling of names can be attributed to the fact that the initial developers of the orthography were not trained linguists.

Although the orthographies went through a series of reforms, the spellings of place names remained unchanged. Such a situation is likely to continue for many years because after independence no attempt was made to correct these past injustices. This paper is intended to indicate how place names were affected by the colonial authorities and to suggest the panacea to redress this situation.

2. How the colonial authorities affected place names in Namibia

When considering place, two categories can be

distinguished, namely the official names and the private names. The giving of official names to place varies from country to country. The German South West Africa adopted principles regarding the official place names. The aim of these principles was to resolve the problems which included the retaining of Herero and Nama names, standardization of spelling and the Germanization of certain names. Farm owners were allowed to give names without going through the red tape of the state, but after the farms had been registered, any change of the name had to be made in consultation with the land surveyors and cartographers. Place names appeared in the reports of the individual travellers and missionaries. The book of Alexander of 1838 was the first comprehensive publication in which place names in South West Africa were clearly entered. His voyage map indicated that the names of water places and dwellings were anglicised but the mountains were named after the English personalities. Before 1850 the missionaries lifted names from the Bible and gave them to the mission stations.

Jeff (1995:4) mentions, for example, extreme cases of how the Nazis during their reign in Germany applied name changes and practices from their positions of power. In South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, rulers and communities prescribed names and applied naming practices according to their home languages, world views, ideologies, cul-

tural background and other reigning principles. A typical example of a place in South Africa, where a dominating group or community conducted naming practices according to its own background and culture, is what is today known as East London. Although the area of the current East London was almost in the heart of what was known as Xhosa land in the early 19th century, the English colonists of 1836 ignored the presence of the Xhosa and other groups in the area and started naming features such as the port, and later the town, suburbs, streets and other features after prevailing names in Britain or prominent English features and figures (Coaster, 2005:46-47).

In 1870 there were people who asked for the retention of Herero and Nama names. One of these people was Dr. C. G Buttner who emphasised that the indigenous names be retained. As a result, a Commission was established to look into the spelling of place names. The Commission made the following recommendations in 1892:

- a) Existing names should be retained
- b) Names should be spelled correctly taking into account the phonetics of the word.

In 1892 the *Deutsches Kolonialblatt* published the name giving principles which included the following points:

- a) Existing indigenous names should be retained at all costs
- b) In case no indigenous names exist for a place, a name given to a place by the European pioneers should be retained. If there is no name available for a place, then the name to be selected for such a place should reflect the physical characteristics of a place
- c) Unnecessary changing of place names that are well-known should be avoided.
- d) Newly coined names which have not been officially approved, should be replaced with the names that agree with the above-mentioned principles.

In 1907 the power to approve place names was vested in the governor in order to root out the duplication of names and to retain the indigenous names. However in 1908, a meeting was held in Germany in which the purity of German in German South West Africa was stressed. The meeting made the resolutions which were brought to the attention of Windhoek Branch. In 1909 the missionary C. Wandres tabled them before Windhoek Branch. One of the sugges-

tions strongly criticised the use of the names that are difficult to pronounce by the Germans. The desire for the Germanization of place names grew in Germany. The governor of German South West Africa was requested by the head office in Mainz to strive for the Germanization of place names. This resulted in the farm owners Germanizing the names of their farms, but the policy on the retention of indigenous names remained intact.

When Germany's troops were defeated at the hands of the Union Defence Force at Khorab in July 1915, a preliminary regime was installed (Hartmann, 1998:271). This signalled a new era in the existence of the Aawambo. Part of the agreement which put South Africa in control of South West Africa was that the region should be developed. The subsequent building of railway lines, development of the Walvisbay harbour and industries created job opportunities. As a result of migration labour the Aawambo were drawn from their territory, and had to learn the new bread and butter language – Afrikaans. The situation escalated into urbanization of many Aawambo.

In developing South West Africa, South Africa had to draw the map of the South West Africa in order to develop her effectively. Most places already bore names from indigenous languages from South West Africa. Places bore names from Otjiherero and Khoekhoegowab respectively. The authority then had the challenging task of selecting names for the places. Some place names were retained. The retention of the place names depended on the size of the number of speakers of a particular language, for example, a place that was occupied by many Otjiherero speaking people retained an Otjiherero name. Kamupingene (1985:69) states:

The colonists renamed many places and popularised new names through the administrative structure. It also appears that Otjiherero place names have been replaced at those localities where there were few or no clusters of Hereros. This seems to be the reason why at places where the Hereros were numerous, for example, at Okahandja, Omaruru, Otjiwarongo etc., Otjiherero names have been retained to the present.

What Kamupingene has stated needs comment, because it appears that the population size of a particular ethnic group was not used as a criterion for giving indigenous names. Möller (1983:196) states that the long Herero names and inability to master

clicks led to the replacement of Nama and Herero names with German names. So, the length of the name and the absence of the clicks in a name seem to have been the criteria in retaining indigenous names.

The retention of Otjiherero names during the German rule in South West Africa is emphasised by Möller (1983:196) and Coetzee and Stern (1985:7) who emphasised that the German policy was geared towards the retaining of Herero and Nama names, standardising spelling and Germanization of certain names.

The following towns retained Otjiherero names:

Omaruru – a place of salty water

Otjiwarongo – a fertile land

Okahandja – a small valley

Outjo

and Khoekhoegowab names such as

Usakos; Karibib; Gobabis; Tsumeb

However, names from Khoekhoegowab were misspelled, for instance:

Tsumeb for **Tsumep** – a place that would sink into the earth

Usakos for **!Usa-!khos** – a place of holding one's forehead

Karibib for **=Garibeb** – a place of farming activities

Gobabis for **=Khoandawes** – a place where elephants lick salt

These misspellings have brought about the distortion of the meaning of the place names. In Khoekhoegowab once the clicks are omitted, then the meaning of the words change and sometimes the words become meaningless. The complaint on the absence clicks in names persisted even after independence. In *The Namibian* dated, 1 June, 2007, Eliphas//Khoeseb says the following on the restoration of the clicks in the Damara names:

Many Damaras have simplified their names by omitting click sounds because they are difficult for the language groups to pronounce and spell. When one declares name through introduction, the receiver would say, ag, let us let just say Khoeseb, for instance wanting to eliminate the traditional pronunciation of a Damara surname just for convenience sake. I want to encourage my people to take back their click and keep their traditional identity, because we are proud to be Damaras and should be united right up to the clicks.

Although the statement refers to the surnames only, it has to be pointed out that clicks sounds are omitted in place names as well. There are several place names from Khoekhoegowab that are spelt without click sounds in official documents today, e.g Karibib. The Namibian government seems to be content with the status quo.

Commenting on the use of clicks in Zulu names Jenkins et al (1996:58) states:

The pronunciation of clicks presents difficulties to the uninitiated, with the result that the incorrect spellings have been perpetuated in some place names. The town Ixopo in Kwazulu-Natal is an example. The correct spelling is Icobho, with a dental c instead of the lateral x with which it is written. The case of Zulu names poses a particular challenge for the future. In contrast to what happened in many parts of South Africa, when white settlers came to Natal, they kept Zulu geographical names. But no Zulu orthography existed in the early days and so the settlers invented their own approximations for Zulu names.

According to Raper (1972) the results on nomenclature of interlinguistic contact in a country with so divergent a population are particularly complex. Place names given by the Bushmen and Hottentots have in many cases outlived them and their language. Added to this, the reproduction by Europeans in speech and writing of Khoisan place names particularly the click sounds have further complicated the position. Furthermore, subsequent occupiers of or visitors to the territory being unacquainted with the original meanings of these names have accommodated their sound and form into their own languages so that considerable difficulty is experienced in tracing these names back to their original meaning and form.

The Rhenish Missionaries who reduced Khoekhoegowab and Otjiherero to writing had to grapple with the writing system of Oshiwambo because no orthography existed before their arrival in Namibia. But the colonists seem to have misspelled the names of places through ignorance. Kampingene (1985) gives the names of Otjiherero names that have been misspelled:

Opuuo for **Ohopoho** – it is enough or that is all

Okatjirute for **Okatjorute** – a place named after a dry tree

Okondjesu for **Okondjezu** – a small place with grass

Otjimbingwe for **Otjizinge** – an appealing place with regard to its beauty

Otjisondo for **Otjozondü** – a place of sheep

Ruacana for **Ruhakana**

He further points out that European settlers usurped places previously inhabited by Herero pastoralists and heard the names of the places but they did not establish the correct spelling of the names. The colonists have of course erred in writing down the names incorrectly but the question that arises is: Did the correct spelling exist when the South Africans occupied Namibia? According to Tirronen (1977) the orthography of several indigenous languages in South West Africa went through a series of reforms because the missionaries were not always satisfied with the existing orthography. It appears that the colonists simply adhered to the writing system that was available. But after the orthography was standardised in the early seventies the authority did not change spelling of the place names accordingly. Jenkins et al (1996:106) argue that:

It is generally advisable that where the orthography of a language has changed, this should not be made retrospective to geographical names, but may apply only to subsequent new names. However, where a name is a gross linguistic corruption which public opinion would like to see corrected, this should be changed according to the new orthography.

The name issue became a bone of contention prior to independence in political circles. Several nationalists felt that colonial names had to be replaced with the African names and those that have been rendered meaningless owing to European ignorance and prejudice need to have their meanings traced back and restored (Kamupingene, 1985).

The place names in Kavango and Caprivi were also misspelled and some places were renamed. The following place names in Caprivi have been misspelled:

Kalimbeza for Kalimbesa

Buche for Buchi

Caprivi was originally known as Intenge but it was named after a German count, Leo von Caprivi who settled in Intenge in 1884.

The names that have been misspelled in Kavango are as follows:

Rundu for Runtu

Nkurenkuru for Kurekuru

Vunguvungu for Uvunguvungu

Sarasungu for Sarusungu

Omashare for Mashare

The colonial authority did not only misspell the place names but replaced some original African names with European names. The colonists renamed many places and popularised new names through the administrative structures. Most of the misspelled names used in the official documents prior to independence have been retained for official purposes in the independent Namibia.

Although the colonial authority retained some indigenous names, there are several names of towns that were replaced. The following new names emerged:

Swakopmund; Walvisbay; Mariental; Luderitz;

Grootfontein; Windhoek; Keetmanshoop;

Rehoboth

All these towns bore names from indigenous languages prior to the advent of colonialism. The towns bore names from Khoekhoegowab and Otjiherero respectively. The renaming of these towns might be attributed to the fact that more than one tribe claimed the ownership of a place. According to Kaura (2005) the colonial authority renamed some places because they could not spell and pronounce the names. Where they managed to spell the place names, they adapted the names as they pleased.

Commenting on the rise of foreign names in Southern Africa, Raper (1987) argues:

From the second half of the 15th century, Portuguese, Dutch, English, French, German and other names were given. The evolution of Afrikaans further enriched the geographical nomenclature. Settlement, colonization and immigration, particularly as a result of the exploitation of metal and mineral resources, and of urban and industrial development, added names from Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Indian, and other languages. As may be expected, cultural and language contact between these peoples is reflected in the place names of the country.

Older names were altered, adapted, translated (wholly or in part), and supplanted.

It is true that cultural and language contact is only reflected in name alteration, because there are sev-

eral Oshiwambo names that were changed probably due to mishearing and lack of knowledge of Oshiwambo by the non-Oshiwambo speakers. Such a situation resulted in the misspelling of place names.

There are Oshiwambo names that have been misspelled such as Namutoni/Namutuni, Etosha, Onuno. The meaning of the official name Namutuni means a place of banks and if spelled Namutoni it means you shit. The correct form of the name is Amutuni. Amutuni is the name of the vlei and it means the embankment. The official name of the place today is Namutuni. The clash took place in 1904 between the Germans and the warriors of king Nehale IyaMpingana of the Aandonga. In 1957 Namutuni opened its Beau-Geste-like features for the first time to tourists. The modern rest camp is a far cry from its former colonial setting, although the refurbished fort still brings a sense of the bygone days of German Empire in Africa. (Berry et al, 1998; Eirola, 1992). Etosha is the corrupted form of the name Etotha which means a place with water or water plains. Etosha is the name of the Game Reserve in the Oshikoto Region. Onuno is the corrupted form of Onhuno which means gun-sight. It lies on the border between Ondonga and Uukwanyama. Tribal war took place between the Aandonga and Aakwanyama during which there was one sharp shooter hence the name Onhuno (gun-sight).

Writing for *The Namibian* of December 2006, Ndinomwaami calls for the restoration of original names of Oshiwambo places when he says:

I would like many of our places to be given their original names and not to continue with their misspelt names. Examples are Amutuni which has been baptised as Namutoni and places such as Etotha which has been baptised as Etosha. Let justice be done on this. The arguments that it would cost us a lot of money and we would lose tourists, etc. would not hold water.

It is one's democratic right to call for the correction of the past injustices with regard to the misspellings of place names, but if the authorities consider all place names to be corrected, a country would incur huge losses because more money would be spent on name changes. The changing of place names does not only affect the Government, but individuals would have to

spend money as well, because they would have to change their addresses.

Some of the misspellings cannot be attributed to the colonists only, but the factors such as mishearing and dialectal variation also play a role. There are several. Place names which are historically incorrect, such as Ontananga for Ontanangaa (name of a village), Ohaingu for Okwahingu (name of a parish), etc. The contraction of these names cannot be ascribed to the outsiders. The Aawambo whose languages have been reduced to writing by the missionaries, have adapted the place names to their dialects, e.g. Oshakati (the name of town) has been adapted to Oshindonga. This name comes from Oshikwambi. The sound *sh* does not appear in Oshikwambi. The Oshakati should have *tsh* instead of *sh*. So the correct spelling of this place should be Otshakati. The misspelling of the place name Onuno also cannot be ascribed to colonial ignorance, because the Aandonga (the speakers of Oshindonga) pronounce this name without the aspiration. Thus they may adapt the name to Oshindonga.

3. Recommendations

It is important to correct the wrongs of the past with the regard to places, thus the National Heritage Council needs to collect all the wrongly spelled names and replace them with the correctly spelled names of places. Community leaders should be involved in their exercise so that they can give the correct names of places under their jurisdiction.

Names of places that were replaced with names from European languages should not be tampered with because the replacement of a European name with the name from one ethnic group might create tension. It is a well known fact that various ethnic groups bestow a name to a single place, for example, the Aawambo, the Herereo and Namas have each a name for Windhoek, therefore, the preference of one name to the others might fuel tension.

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Upcoming Meetings of Groups Associated with Geographical Names

FIG 2010 – XXIVth International Federation of Surveyors, including Session TS 71 – Geographical Names
(<http://www.fig2010.com>), 11-16 April 2010, Sydney, Australia.

American Association of Geographers (AAG) – Annual meeting 2010 including sessions on Place Names and Gazetteers
(<http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings/2010/index.htm>),
14-18 April 2010, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

International Geographical Union
(<http://www.igu-net.org/>)
IGU Regional Conference 2010 – 12-16 July 2010, Tel Aviv, Israel
IGU Regional Conference 2011 – November 2011, Santiago, Chile
IGU International Geographical Congress 2012 – 26-30 August 2012, Köln, Germany

International Conference on Indigenous Place Names 2010
Exploring ways to reclaim cultural identity through place names
(<http://www.icipn2010.no/>)
3-8 September 2010, Sámi University College, Guovdageaidnu, Norway

International Hydrographic Organization – GEBCO – Sub-Committee on Undersea Features (SCUFN)
(<http://www.iho-ohi.net/english/committees-wg/ircc/gebco/scufn.html>)
11-14 September 2010, Callao, Peru

Names Society of Southern Africa
Theme: Homo nominans: mankind, the namer
Bertie Neethling, bneethling@uwc.ac.za
NSA 2010, 26-28 October 2010, Club Mykanos, South African West Coast (Atlantic Ocean)

ICC 2011 – 25th International Cartographic Conference
(<http://www.icc2011.fr>)
3-8 July 2011, Paris, France

International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS)
(<http://www.icosweb.net/index.php/home.html>)
– 24th ICOS Congress,
4-10 September 2011, Barcelona, Spain