

2009

Standardization of geographical names - the United Nations outreach to individual countries



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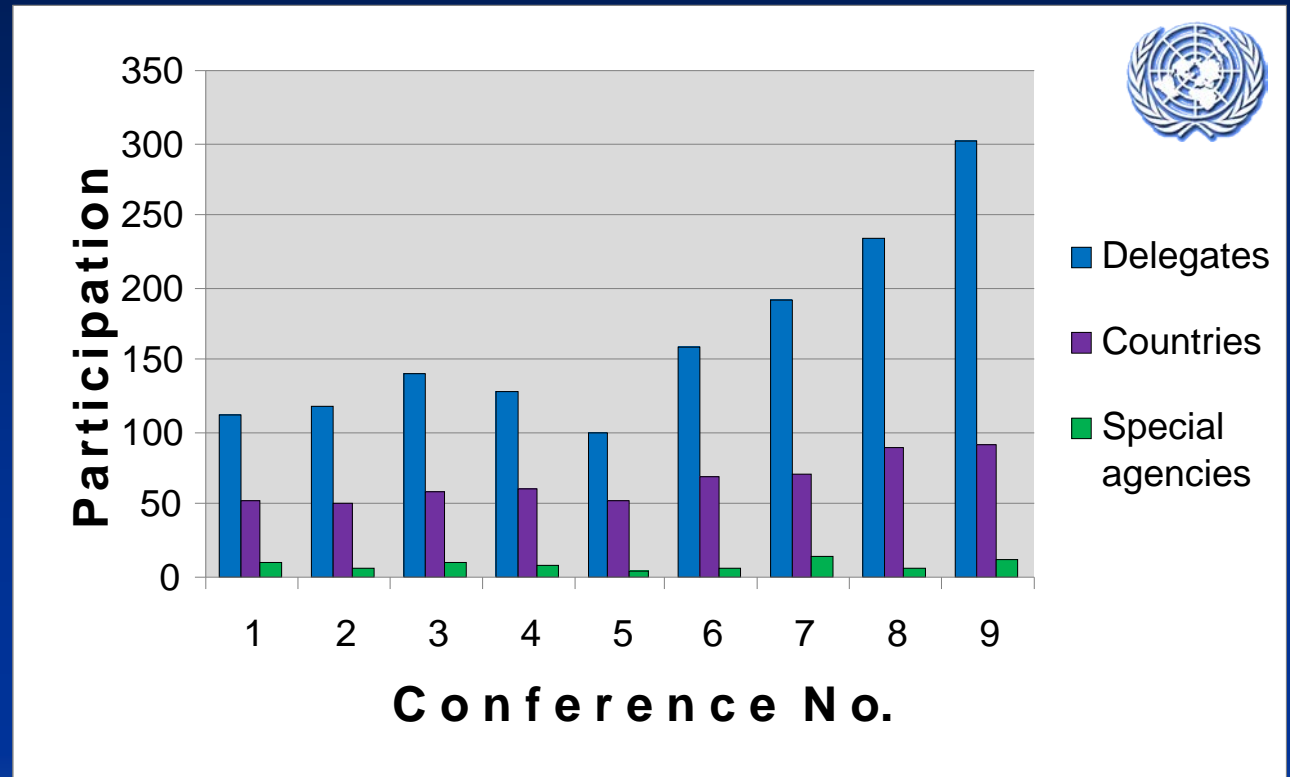
Early days at the UN

- UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) 1948
- First Regional Cartographic Conf. for Asia and Pacific 1955
- ECOSOC resolution 715 A (XXVII) 1959
- Meeting of first experts group 1960
- First Conference on the standardization of geographical names in 1967
 - national standardization
 - basis of international standardization (romanization)
 - resolution I/4 ... foundation



UN Conferences 1967-2007

- Peak at 3rd Conference - resurgence to 9th
- 2007
 - 91 countries
 - 301 reps
- Countries
 - 2002 - 10 new
 - 2007 - 8 new



- Continue to encourage countries and agencies

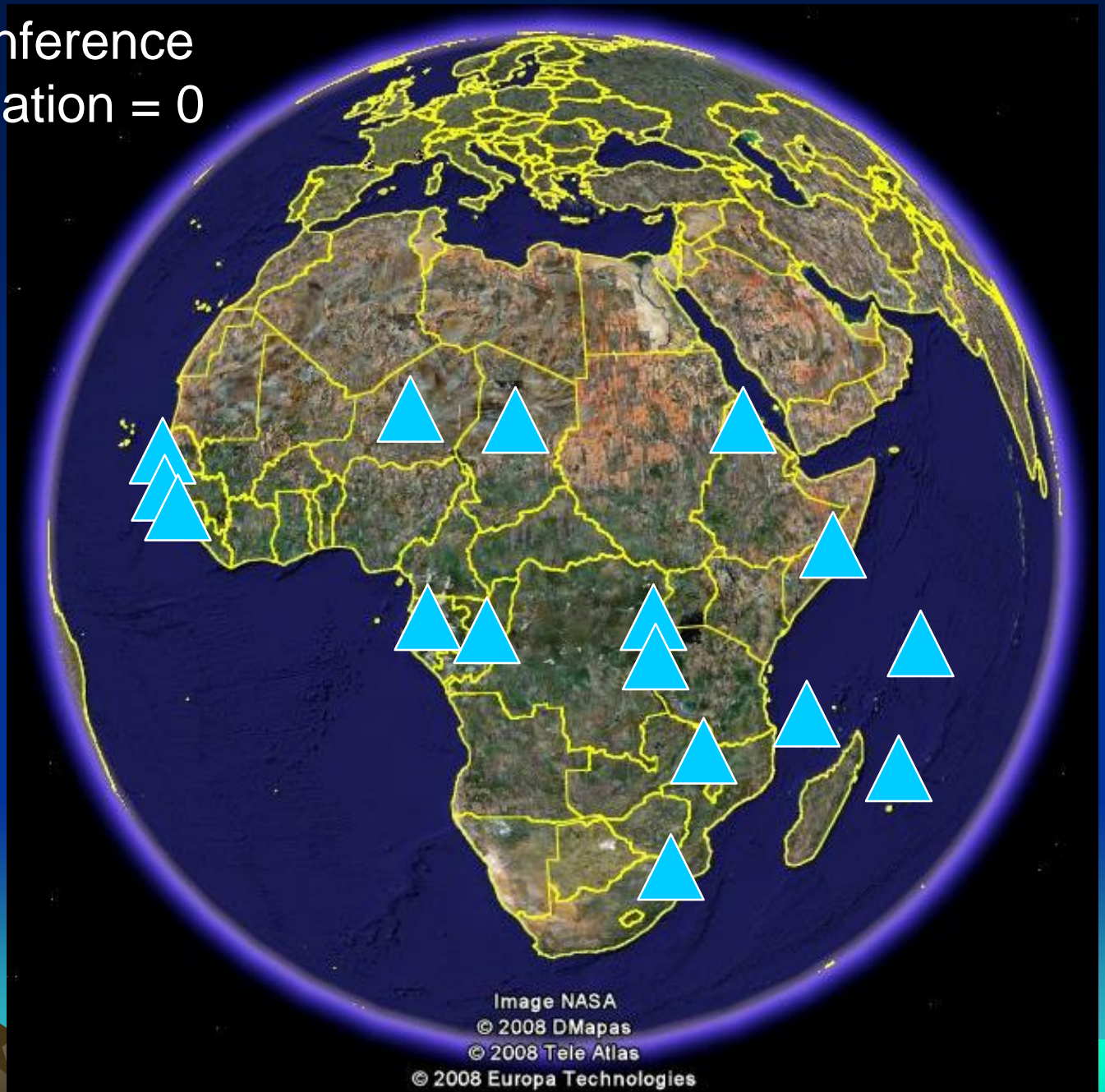


Africa: participation at Conferences

- 7 : Morocco (1)
- 6 : Cameroon, Egypt, Libya (3)
- 5 : Algeria, Nigeria, South Africa (3)
- 4 : Botswana, Kenya, Madagascar, Sudan (4)
- 3 : Guinea, Liberia, Mozambique, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda (7)
- 2 : Angola, Burkina Faso, Central African Rep., Dem. Rep. Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Namibia, Zambia (9)
- 1 : Benin, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Lesotho, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Sao Tome & Principe, Tanzania, Zimbabwe (10)
- 0 : ??? (16)

UN Conference participation = 0

Burundi
Chad
Comoros
Congo
Eritrea
Gabon
Gambia
Guinea-Bissau
Malawi
Mauritius
Niger
Rwanda
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Somalia
Swaziland





UNCSSGN resolutions

- Conference resolutions reflect the technical work discussed
- From 9 Conferences - 195 resolutions assembled and grouped by subject area (26 groups)
 - Refer to: national standardization; systems of romanization; distribution of data through gazetteers (hard copy/web); data exchange in accepted formats; training and education; tools, toponymic guidelines; exonyms
 - <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgnresolutions-en.pdf>
 - <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgnresolutions-fr.pdf>
 - + on-line database of resolutions



UNGEEN

- UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names
 - one of seven expert groups of ECOSOC
 - follows up on implementation of resolutions
 - convenes between conferences (2) ... 24 sessions
 - supported by a Secretariat at UNHQ (NY)
 - creates working groups to follow up on resolutions
 - has 23 geographical/linguistic divisions for grass roots work





Among current issues

- Lack of advancement in some regions
 - e.g. parts of Africa
 - *“Benefits of a country’s toponyms not really recognized”*
(Akinyemi)
 - *“Relevance of toponymy not generally appreciated”*
(Ngo)
 - Questions of communication, commitment, leadership, continuity, recognition ... and, of course, resources

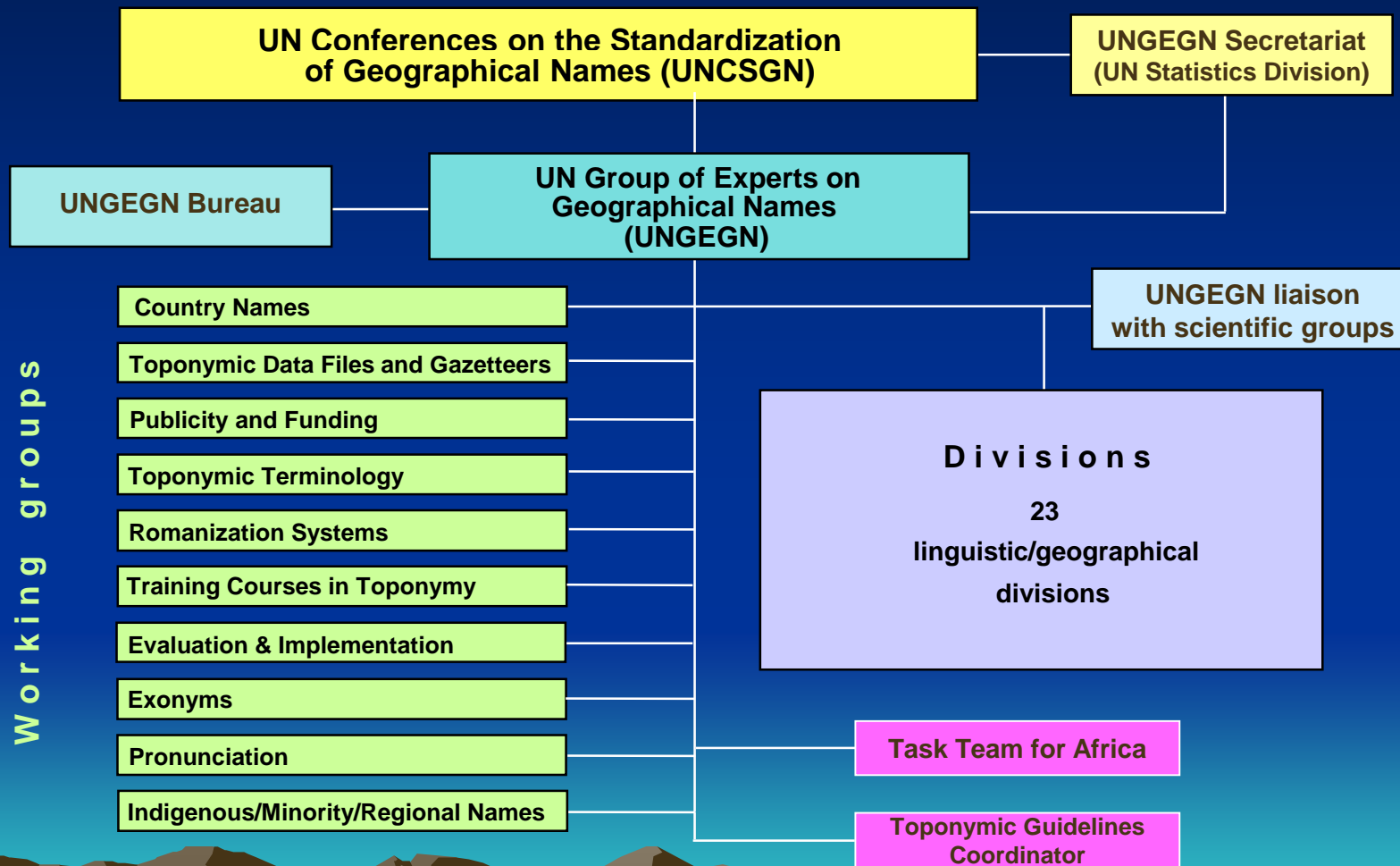


Task Team for Africa

- **Created a Task Team for Africa, 2004**
 - Working through African organizations
 - (e.g. Economic Commission for Africa)
 - Organizing training where possible
 - South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, Sudan, Tunis, Burkina Faso, Kenya
 - Participating in Conferences/regional meetings
 - CODI V in Ethiopia; Africa GIS 2007 in Burkina Faso; IGU in Tunis; CODIST-I
 - UNGEGN 25 in Africa - Nairobi, 2009
 - Essay/poem contest



UNGEGN structure





UNGEEN Divisions

- Africa Central
- Africa East
- Africa South
- Africa West
- Arabic
- Asia East (other than China)
- Asia South-East and Pacific South-West
- Asia South-West (other than Arabic)
- Baltic
- Celtic
- China
- Dutch- and German-speaking
- East Central and South-East Europe
- Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia
- East Mediterranean (other than Arabic)
- French-speaking
- India
- Latin America
- Norden
- Portuguese-speaking
- Romano-Hellenic
- United Kingdom
- United States / Canada



WG - Training courses in Toponymy

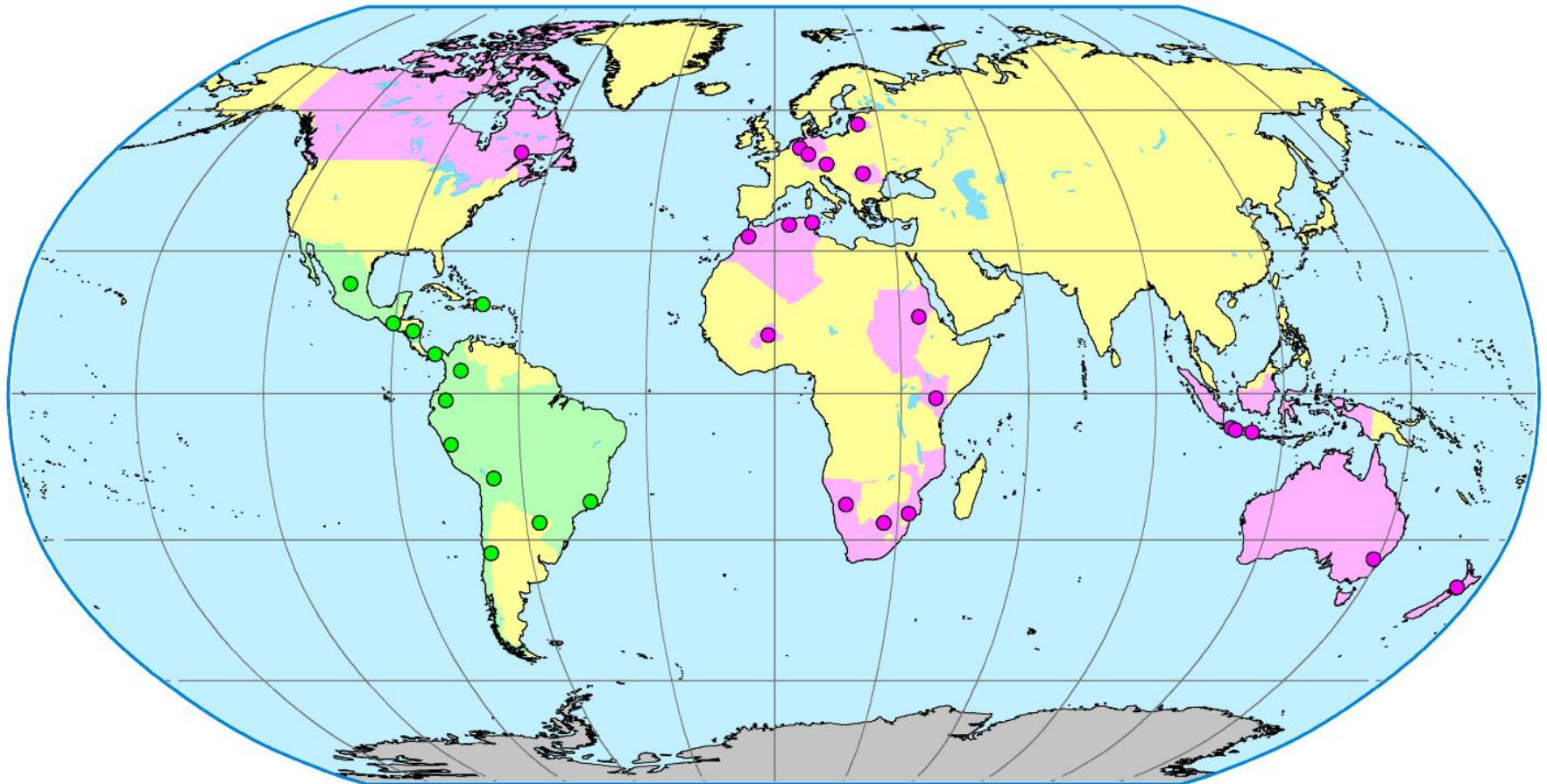
- Courses offered to international audiences since 1982 - in various languages and locations
- Collection of course outlines, etc. available
- Web site: <http://toponymycourses.geog.uu.nl>
- To reach a larger audience ... moving towards web-based courses
 - Div francophone <http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/>
 - ICA <http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet>





International toponymy training

Toponymy Training Courses



● **UNEGN courses**

● **PAIGH courses**



Marracuene fieldwork

Fieldwork and processing



Training in Mozambique

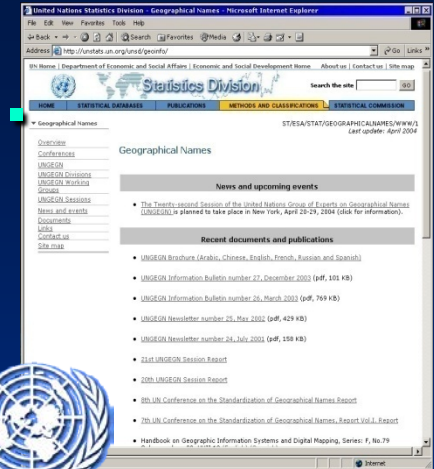
At Marracuene administrative office



UNGEGN website . . .

unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/

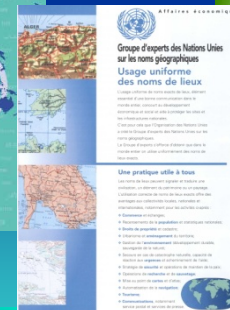
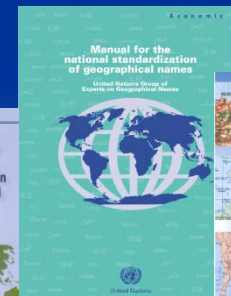
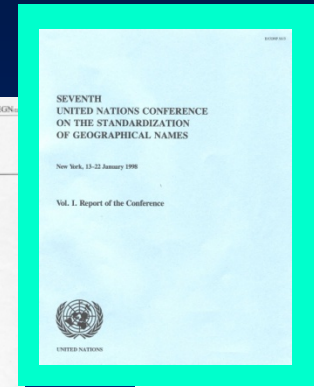
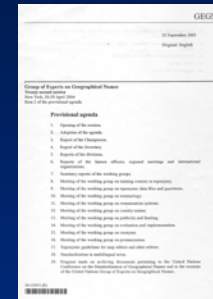
- Overview ... Mandate
- Conferences
- UNGEGN
 - Divisions
 - Working Groups e.g. Romanization ... www.eki.ee/wgrs
 - Sessions
- News and events
- Documents and publications
- Links
 - National names authorities; toponymic guidelines
 - Interactive national toponymic databases; international agencies
- Contacts ...





Some available materials

- Reports; resolutions; technical papers (over 2000)
- Glossaries of terminology (1984 and 2002)
 - 6 languages; 375 terms + 2007 addendum
- Brochure – general information – 6 languages
- New mini brochure – names in georeferencing
- Two new manuals – basic “plus”; technical reference
- UNGEGN Information Bulletin - 2 /year





Some current issues

- Availability of good standardized names data
 - ... cooperative ventures for socio-economic benefits
 - EuroGeoNames network
 - Asia SE and Pacific SW divisional project
 - collaboration with GoogleEarth
 - **UNGEGN Geographical Names Database**
 - Division francophone website; Portuguese language cooperation



UNGEGN Geonames Database

- Access through UNGEGN web site
- To include names of:
 - Countries
 - Capital and cities > 100,000
- .. original writing system
- .. romanized
- .. variants (exonyms, name changes)
- .. audio for endonyms
- .. geo-referenced

UNEGN World Geographical Names

Geographical names | FAQ | Feedback | Contact

Multilingual, multiscriptural dataset of names of countries, capitals and major cities.

Select a country

Please roll over a country to see the country name in the UN languages or over a city to see the city name endonyms (romanized only) and the English name if available.

Query

Interactive map

Country names

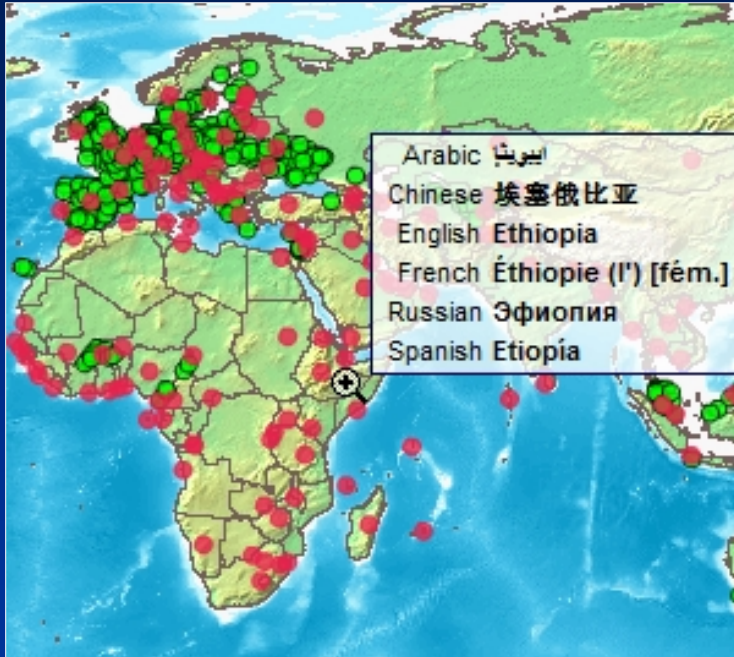
Endonyms		
Language	Short name	Formal name
Thai	ประเทศไทย <i>Prathet Thai</i>	ราชอาณาจักรไทย <i>Ratcha Anachak Thai</i>

United Nations languages		
Language	Short name	Formal name
Arabic	تايلاند	مملكة تايلاند
Chinese	泰国	泰王国
English	Thailand	the Kingdom of Thailand
French	Thaïlande (la)	le Royaume de Thaïlande
Russian	Таиланд	Королевство Таиланд
Spanish	Tailandia	el Reino de Tailandia

Tabular format



Map interface



Countries

- display six UN languages

Arabic	French
Chinese	Russian
English	Spanish

Capital and other cities

Local name(s) - romanized
English, if available





Table format – country names

Country names

Endonyms

Language	Short name	Formal name	
Swedish	Sverige	Konungariket Sverige	i

United Nations languages

Language	Short name	Formal name	
Arabic	السويد	مملكة السويد	i
Chinese	瑞典	瑞典王国	i
English	Sweden	the Kingdom of Sweden	i
French	Suède (la)	le Royaume de Suède	i
Russian	Швеция	Королевство Швеция	i
Spanish	Suecia	el Reino de Suecia	i

- Endonyms ... short and formal names
- UN languages ... short and formal names
- Other languages ... short and formal names
- Data source




Table format – cities - capitals

Capital and other major cities

Stockholm Lat: 59.33 | Long: 18.06

Endonym

Language	City name	Source
Swedish	Stockholm 	UNEGN

United Nations Languages

Language	City name	Source
Arabic	ستكهولم	UN terms
Chinese	斯德哥尔摩	UN terms
English	Stockholm	UN terms
French	Stockholm	UN terms
Russian	Стокгольм	UN terms
Spanish	Estocolmo	UN terms



- endonyms
- UN languages
- other languages
- lat. long.
- language
- source
- sound (endonyms)



UNGEEN : World Names

- Currently:



- Working on the user interface
- Developing the database
 - Country names - endonyms and in 6 UN languages
 - Resolving the names of capital cities (endonyms)
 - Gathering data – cities >100 000 ... countries update list of cities currently shown on the UN Statistics Division website
unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/densurb/urban.aspx
 - ✓ And to provide the pronunciation  





25th UNGEGN session

- ◆ Nairobi ...

 - ◆ May 5-12, 2009

- ◆ Forum for discussion

- ◆ Networking

- ◆ Encouraging Africa

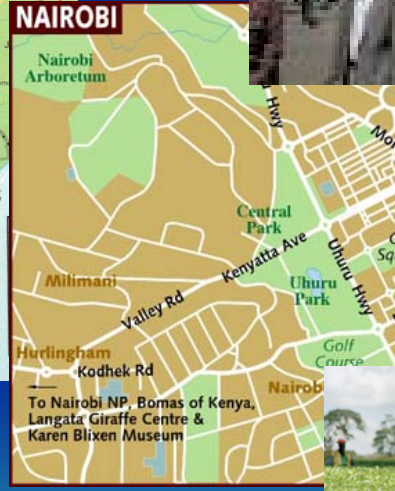
 - ◆ special presentations; posters; workshops; training



- Exchange of experience; information on new initiatives
- Make progress on Working Group activities



A map, a name, a cultural identity ...



Найроби ナイロビ
 나이로비 內羅畢
 Ναϊρόμπι نيروبي
 Nayroobi Naròbaidh
 नैरोबी נירובי





Suggestions?

- Finances from the UN (UN Statistics Division) are limited ... some money for trainees; some could be for trainers ... for workshops or equivalent.
- What would you like to see UNGEGN do to help countries/divisions, etc.?



In concluding ...



- Names are vital elements in accessing our digital world and preserving our cultures
 - standardized spelling and application are key to easy, quick and accurate referencing
 - providing benefits for all users - in government, science, education, public ...
 - a process needs establishing in each country to ensure standardized name information is available nationally and internationally



... in concluding

- The UNCSGN started in 1967, are we attempting the impossible? ... work far from finished, and more relevant than ever with technology / communication changes
- National authority is fundamental base
- Opportunity for every country to participate - to learn and to share experiences. Individual participation ...different interests
- UN is us ... we must make it work!



Olhe para o mundo
com outros olhos



Looking to the
future ...
for improved
communication
and a world
at peace

unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo

