

**UNGEEN Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation and
UNGEEN Working Group on Publicity and Funding**

**Sheraton Fisherman's Wharf Hotel
San Francisco**

21-23 April 2008

MINUTES

Participants

Mr. Ki-Suk Lee, Convenor, WG on Evaluation and Implementation, UNGEEN (Republic of Korea)
Mr. David Munro, Convenor, WG on Publicity and Funding, UNGEEN (United Kingdom)
Ms. Helen Kerfoot, Chairperson, UNGEEN (Canada)
Mr. Brahim Atoui, Vice Chairperson, UNGEEN (Algeria)
Mr. Botolv Helleland, Rapporteur (Norway)
Mr. Sungjae Choo, Professor, Kyung-Hee University (Republic of Korea)
Mr. Yeon-Taek Ryu, Professor, Chungbuk National University (Republic of Korea)

Mr. Stefan Schweinfest (UN Statistics Division) on phone for part of the meeting on April 22
Mr. Yacob Zewoldi (UN Statistics Division) on phone for part of the meeting on April 22

Observers

Mr. Hung-Muk Cho, National Geographic Information Institute (Republic of Korea)
Mr. Young-Jun Ahn, National Geographic Information Institute (Republic of Korea)

1. Welcome

Welcoming remarks were made by Ms. Kerfoot (UNGEEN Chair), Mr. Lee and Mr. Munro (Working Group Convenors) and each of the participants.

2. Administrative matters

It was agreed that Mr. Munro and Mr. Lee would chair alternate sessions, and that Mr. Helleland would act as rapporteur. The provisional agenda was approved with the addition of a number of items recommended by the UNGEEN Chair.

3. Mandate, objectives, etc. of the two Working Groups

The mandates as currently presented on the UNGEGN website were considered to be suitable at the present time.

4. Outstanding business from Joint Meetings held in New York and Honolulu in 2007

The minutes of these two meetings were reviewed and the following items were identified as actions to carry forward (other than those included in agenda items to follow):

Honolulu:

4.2.c Create templates for development of gazetteers, fieldwork collection, etc.

Action/Responsibility: Relevant UNGEGN Working Groups

6.13 Spanish versions of the UNGEGN brochure ... has this been reprinted?

Action: UNGEGN Secretariat

5. Report of the UNGEGN Secretariat

a. Completed items since the Ninth UNCSGN

In the absence of representatives from the Secretariat, the UNGEGN Chair reported that a number of items had been completed since August, by Yacob Zewoldi and other UN Statistics Division staff.

- The Report of the Ninth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was completed, edited by the UN, translated into all the UN languages, mailed out through UN regular channels and put on the UNGEGN website. Formal approval of resolutions is scheduled for the ECOSOC meeting in July 2008.

Action: On the UNGEGN website, put links to documents of the Conference (INF.5) and list of participants (INF.4) beside the pdf files of the Conference report.

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/9thuncsgnsessionreport.htm>).

Responsibility: UNGEGN Chair and Secretariat.

- UNGEGN Information Bulletin for December was completed and distributed (paper copies through UN regular channels and email notification to UNGEGN e-mailing list). The text of the Bulletin is included on the UNGEGN website. The deadline for the next Bulletin is 16 June, for distribution in August.

- UNGEGN website has been updated with additional reports and documents, new events for 2008 and 2009 have been included. A link from the Statistics Division home page to the UNGEGN website now exists, but the use of "Geographic Information" is not entirely obvious.

Action: Continue to upload documents from past Conferences and Sessions.

Responsibility: UNGEGN Secretariat

Action: Encourage experts to have links to the UNGEGN site made on their websites and those of other relevant groups/bodies.

Responsibility: UNGEGN experts and liaison officers

Action: Investigate whether other UN agencies have links to the UNGEGN website

Responsibility: UNGEGN Secretariat

- The 2007 Addendum to the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* (2002) was edited and translated at the UN and is now available on the UNGEGN website in the six UN languages.

- Evaluation forms distributed at the Ninth Conference have been processed.

b. Staff changes

Mr. Zewoldi continues to be our main contact person in the Secretariat. Ms. Sabine Kacha is on a year's leave of absence and staffing to fill this position on a temporary basis is in hand. In the interim Ms. Li Wang will assist Mr. Zewoldi for UNGEGN matters.

c. UNGEGN World Geonames database

Data has been received from 41 countries, with several other requests awaiting response. Temporary assistance in the Secretariat made it possible to process data during the winter. With regard to design implementation and user interface the need for support continues. It was suggested that a progress note in the Bulletin could also be used to request technical assistance for data base implementation. Mr. Schweinfest indicated that an individual is currently available to enter data.

Action: Report for the Bulletin. Request more data from countries and process this data. Further the design and implementation process and establish further targets towards UNGEGN 2009.

Responsibility: Secretariat with assistance from UNGEGN Chair

Action: Before design implementation is completely finalized, an ad hoc group should review it (appropriate WG Chairs and other technical experts)

Responsibility: Secretariat and UNGEGN Chair

Action: Acquire the verified file of endonyms for capital cities

Responsibility: UNGEGN Chair

d. National names authorities contacts database

Lists and map of national names authorities are available on the UNGEGN website, but questions of ongoing maintenance were raised.

Action: Look at the UN Statistics Division database for contact names and assess its capabilities for UNGEGN in the future.

Responsibility: UNGEGN Secretariat and UNGEGN Chair.

e. Funding for training

A budget had been submitted through the Secretariat to assist with three “training” events in 2008: Vienna, Burkina Faso/Tunisia, Romania. So far two students from Uzbekistan are having air tickets provided for Vienna. Similar arrangements are anticipated for the other venues. Discussion ensued about the possibility of an international training course being offered by the Republic of Korea in the future.

Web-based training and combined in-person/web training were also discussed.

Action: *Continue to pursue the funding for 2008*

Responsibility: *UNGEGN Secretariat and Chair*

Action: *Consider the possibility of making further training materials available on the website, in particular, some specific articles on toponymic education from Onoma 39.*

Responsibility: *Mr. Helleland*

6. The work of UNGEGN

a. Review of evaluation questionnaire forms received at the 9th UNCSGN

Mr. Ryu summarized the analysis he had made of the responses to the questionnaires. The overall assessment by participants was very good. After discussion of the details some general points arose to improve the Conference/Session, including:

- Encourage developing countries
- Stress particular issues rather than just presentation of information
- More informal (e.g. social) events
- Some supported a shorter (6-day) conference with shorter presentation times
- More joint reports (e.g. division reports) and combined reports
- More use of summaries/abstracts
- More use of Powerpoint presentations
- Hold working group meetings during Conference

Some suggestions made by delegates have been used for UNGEGN 2009 planning, for instance:

- Division meetings 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Wednesday and Thursday, and perhaps Tuesday lunch time;
- Emphasize special presentations; time limit for presentations 5 minutes;
- UNGEGN also needs abstracts for papers and the appropriate agenda item identified;
- No country reports, but include this information in division reports as necessary;
- Template for division report (varying according to level of activity of division) – for “active” divisions report on common activities and good practice examples and problems/solutions; for less “active” or inactive divisions, common items from countries;
- In papers, if possible draw attention to issues and resolution of these issues;
- Documents filed on time will receive priority (for web, copying, etc.);

- More information on the country and the UN facility should be included on the UNGEGN website;
- Diagram of UN, UNGEGN, its working groups and divisions could be included on the website;
- Cut down on number of copies made, by bringing one's own computer and having strong Wi-Fi available.

Action: Consider these items in Session organization and include information about presentations, etc. in the Bulletin

Responsibility: Secretariat and Chair

b. Planning for UNGEGN 2009

Location and preparations – tentatively 5-12 May 2009, but await ECOSOC confirmation in July.

- UNGEGN Secretariat to cooperate with Nairobi staff
- details about the facilities (located 15 km outside Nairobi), transportation and hotels, etc. will be provided by the Secretariat for inclusion in the Bulletin and safety and health issues will be addressed

Treatment of individual agenda items – need later to verify if time allows for individual division reports or whether group summary reports will be needed.

Ideas for special presentations, displays, workshops

Special presentations: the following suggestions were put forward:

- Humanitarian issues, such as refugee situation in Darfur
- UNEP – environmental issues
- UNESCO – Habitat
- IHO-SCUFN – progress and principles
- ESRI
- Google
- Communication and transport issues
- UNEGN World Geonames database
- Databases recently developed (e.g. Norway with Croatia)
- EuroGeoNames – lessons learned
- African successes
- Special talk on Bantu languages

Displays:

- African display
 - Surveyors General on processing names
 - Work of a names authority
 - Field collection
 - Names and maps
 - Gazetteers/databases

Workshops: the following ideas were discussed:

- (a) Friday morning and lunch, and Monday morning and lunch
 - For developing countries
 - Collection of names (including nomadic people, naming for chiefs)
 - Office treatment

Names authorities

EthioGaz

(b) General ... Wednesday and Thursday lunch time

National standardization in a multilingual country

Divisions and their work

Lunchtime workshops would be from 1:45-2:45 and before morning sessions would be 8:45-9:45

It was felt that workshops held on Saturday would not draw participants.

c. Resolutions from the Conferences

Mr. Choo introduced a summary of resolutions that he had compiled. From the 195 resolutions he identified 89 “substantive” resolutions, 98 “administrative” and 8 votes of thanks. He also presented tables indicating the number of resolutions passed at each conference and the number of resolutions for each of the 26 categories used in the Compendium of conference resolutions

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/uncsgnresolutions.htm>), and a summary table of all resolutions classified by these categories. There was considerable discussion about assessing the extent of implementation and effectiveness of resolutions. Rather than carrying out further surveys at this time, it appeared more useful to develop a more user-friendly web-structured access to resolutions by subject (ranging from a very general overview to complete texts of resolutions), including search by keywords and links to relevant resolutions. Mr. Choo volunteered to continue with this project.

d. How to make the work of some Divisions more effective

Discussion took place on recommendations for the work of Divisions, but it was quickly noted that one solution did not fit all cases. For discussion purposes, three categories of divisions were identified. All involved exchange of information. Some suggestions were made as to the focus and structure of divisional activities in these three categories.

- (1) Countries all active and participating in UNGEGN; hold division meetings
 - a. Agenda – progress on items from Conferences and Sessions
 - b. Resolutions – implementation
 - c. Invite nearby division representation
 - d. Helping other divisions – inviting developing countries; distributing documents; offering expertise from their countries; report to other countries by Bulletin or Session documents
 - e. Sharing experiences
 - f. Hold meetings in conjunction with other conferences
- (2) Countries all active and participating in UNGEGN, but no divisional activities
 - a. Problems
 - i. changes of delegates – no continuity
 - ii. Time, funds, politics
 - iii. Do not realize advantages of UNGEGN divisions
 - iv. Head of division needs to be more pro-active
 - v. Archaic divisional grouping

- b. Identify issues of common non-controversial nature
- c. Look at other country groupings for divisions
- (3) Countries not active nor participating in UNGEGN; no divisional activities
 - a. At other regional meetings include geographical names on the agenda
 - b. Select key player(s) who are knowledgeable
 - c. Contact countries for overview
 - d. Explain why names are needed – economic , social and cultural benefits
 - e. Discuss how to go forward helping each other
 - i. Administrative matters
 - ii. Substantive matters (Res. I/4 is very basic)
 - iii. List of needs; list of “assets”
 - iv. Route forward

Actions:

1. *Nairobi ... encourage divisional activities (two morning time slots assigned and workshop on divisional activity)*
2. *Encouragement could be given by UNGEGN representatives attending other conferences*
3. *Items in the Bulletin to offer distribution of documents on request*
4. *“Personalizing” help for divisions (e.g. division might require documents and help with their translation)*
5. *Could we get outside funding to assist division activities?*
6. *Create guidelines for divisional activities, including implementation of resolutions*

e. Task Team for Africa

Mr. Atoui presented the interim report filed on the work of the Task Team, including contributions to the Bulletin; preparation of a training course in Burkina Faso and further possibilities through OACT; reactivation of work of divisions, such as West Africa; and a special session for UNGEGN at the 31st IGC to be held in Tunis. The Task Team consists of all countries in Africa.

Further discussion ensued about details of the UNGEGN half-day session being planned for IGC and the financing of key participants. At least three speakers from Africa would be involved (Algeria, Senegal and another country to be identified).

Action: *The Task Team is encouraged to report regularly to the Bulletin.*

f. Contact with and outreach to multinational companies

Mr. Helleland re-iterated the need for experts to encourage multinational companies (e.g. Google, private mapping companies, airline route maps) to use the names as authorized by national names authorities. This was acknowledged as an ongoing problem.

g. New suggestions for UNGEGN Information Bulletin

The concept of including articles on particular themes as part of issues of the Bulletin was discussed. The idea was well received, but the practical difficulties of editorial

management of more academic/scientific articles were brought forward. However, short contributions on topics related to geographical names standardization were encouraged. It was suggested that a note be included in the Bulletin asking for material people would like to see in the Bulletin, including themes, such as examples of best practice, place name changes, etc. It was also suggested that excerpts from the Glossary be included in the Bulletin, and it was noted that illustrations were now welcomed.

Action: Note in the Bulletin.

UNGEKN website

It was suggested that the information on national names authorities, national databases, etc. could be accessible through a clickable world map. In general the appearance of the home page could be improved, and the information under “Documents and publications” should be better organized. Documents from previous Conferences and Sessions should be added when possible.

7. Publicity

a. Websites

Mr. Munro noted that he had contributed an item on geographical names standardization for the website of the British Cartographic Society. Mr. Munro volunteered to prepare guidelines for the development of toponymic websites and to make this a paper for UNGEKN 2009, with a summary for the Bulletin.

b. UNGEKN Information Bulletin Discussed above.

c. Conferences

It was noted that an ICA interim conference would be held in Chile in 2009 and would be an opportunity to promote the activities of UNGEKN. A request will go in the Bulletin to gather information on future conferences.

d. Press kit

This is the latest in a series of UNGEKN publications now prepared and distributed. The aim of the press kit is to assist delegates in responding to media queries, to try to explain the basics and to include some key examples of interest to the media.

The following topics were agreed as the backbone of the press kit.

- Aims of the kit
- Role of geographical names – not just labels (symbols, identity, educational use, history, etc.)
- Geographical names in a changing world – place names and reasons why names change
- Geographical names in a multilingual and multi-scriptural world
- Why do we need geographical names standardization?
- Role of UNGEKN in promoting geographical names

- UN resolutions
- Geographical names in a digital world – IT, GIS, internet, etc.
- Other groups dealing with names, e.g. IHO, SCAR
- Quotable quotes
- References
- Questions and Answers

Design: The information will be on individual sheets to be distributed in a six-language folder. UNGEGN brochures and individualized information can be included. Mr. Zewoldi had agreed to discuss the design aspects with graphic designers at the UN. The intent would be to include illustrations (maps, photos, multilingual signage, etc.) on the sheets and cover.

Schedule: The press kit is in the Statistics Division budget for 2008-09. Mr. Munro will produce some draft text during the summer of 2008, to be circulated to the Working Group members for comment.

e. Publicity for UNGEGN 2009

In addition to the usual press releases before and after the Session, several other steps could be taken to promote the Session, for example, promotion at other conferences in 2008 (e.g. IGC) and through the UNGEGN Bulletin which should emphasize that, although the session will be stressing an African theme and is being held for the first time in Africa, all countries are encouraged to participate. It was also suggested that the UNESCO Courier might carry an article on the UNGEGN Session.

8. Funding

a. Implementation of Ninth Conference resolution on publication and funding

The request for publications and training courses has been accounted for in the 2008-09 UN Statistics budget.

b. Publications – no further requests have been received for publications for 2008-09.

c. Training – in addition to the training courses to be held in 2008 (see 5a above) a five-day training course was proposed in Kenya, immediately before the Session in Nairobi.

Action: Contact AOCT and Mr. Ottichilo, Director General of the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) in Nairobi to work out a plan.

Responsibility: Mr. Ormeling to be tasked with this activity.

d. Funding for 2009 – UNGEGN session and other activities

A number of organizations should be approached with a view to creating partnerships or finding funding to support participation at UNGEGN 2009. The possibilities include: African Union (political organization in Adis Abeba), African Development Bank

(Tunis), ESRI and Google. Contact could start at any time and could include a multi-pronged approach, including a letter from the chair, personal contacts and approaches from the Secretariat. Technical assistance will probably be available from ECA in Adis Abeba. The Statistics Division anticipates support through their budget for the participation of students/presenters at the UNGEGN Session.

9. Future meetings – see agenda item 12 below.

10. Any other business

Mr. Atoui suggested that UNGEGN institute a life-time achievement award for work in the field of geographical names standardization. This could include posthumous awards. The process for this will be given further consideration.

11. Summary of work

From the minutes the Working Group chairs will prepare individual summary reports for the Bulletin.

12. Next meeting

It was agreed that the next joint meeting will be held in Nairobi in May 2009.

13. Approval of the minutes

After the report was read by the rapporteur and minor changes were made, it was accepted by all participants.

23 April.

Participants visited Google Headquarters in Mountain View on the morning of Wednesday 23 April for a two hour orientation and presentation. This was arranged through Crystal Sholts, Jake Hubert and Dennis Hwang at Google.

Documents submitted to the Joint Working Group meeting:

Brahim Atoui: Interim Report of Task Team of Africa

Sungjae Choo: Evaluating resolutions: a survey design

Yeon-Taek Ryu: Information from Conference evaluation forms from the Ninth Conference

Botolv Helleland
Rapporteur

April 23, 2008