

ESA/RT/C/GN/8  
20 May 1983

ENGLISH ONLY

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL  
NAMES ON THE WORK OF ITS TENTH SESSION

(held at the United Nations Office at Geneva, on 23 August  
and 15 September 1982)

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
TERMS OF REFERENCE .....	1	3
ATTENDANCE .....	2 - 3	3
OPENING OF THE SESSION .....	4	3
RULES OF PROCEDURE .....	5	3
AGENDA FOR THE SESSION .....	6	4
REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS .....	7 - 8	4
ORGANIZATION OF THE FOURTH CONFERENCE .....	9 - 10	4
ELECTION OF OFFICERS .....	11	5
REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOURTH CONFERENCE .....	12 - 13	5
PROGRAMME FOR THE GROUP OF EXPERTS .....	14	5
WORKING GROUP ON DEFINITIONS .....	15	5
WORKING GROUP ON A LIST OF COUNTRY NAMES .....	16	5
WORKING GROUP ON EXTRATERRESTRIAL TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES .....	17	6
WORKING GROUP ON UNDERSEA AND MARITIME FEATURES .....	18	6

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
WORKING GROUP ON A SINGLE ROMANIZATION SYSTEM FOR EACH NON-ROMAN WRITING SYSTEM .....	19	6
WORKING GROUP ON TRAINING COURSES ON TOPONYMY .....	20	7
WORKING GROUP ON AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING AND WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL GAZETTEERS .....	21	7
OTHER BUSINESS .....	22 - 31	7

Annexes

I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS .....		9
II. LIST OF WORKING PAPERS .....		16
III. RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES .....		17
<u>Appendix.</u> <u>MODUS OPERANDI</u> OF THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES .....		27

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The United Nations Group of Experts of Geographical Names was invited by the Secretary-General, in pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 1314 (XLIV), to convene its tenth session at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 23 August 1982, prior to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, and to meet again on 15 September to review the recommendations of the Conference.

#### ATTENDANCE

2. The session was attended by 40 experts from 26 countries representing 13 of the 17 geographical/linguistic divisions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

3. The Chief of the Cartography Section of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, United Nations Secretariat, served as the Secretary of the Group.

#### OPENING OF THE SESSION

4. On 23 August 1982, in the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, the Rapporteur, Mr. A. Rayburn (Canada), in accordance with rule 7 of the rules of procedure, 1/ assumed the office of Chairman and opened the session. Mr. R. Knöpfli (Switzerland) served in the capacity of rapporteur.

#### RULES OF PROCEDURE

5. The Group agreed to follow the rules of procedure as set forth in Working Paper No. 3, with the following amendments:

(a) The first sentence of paragraph 2 of rule 2 was changed to read:

"The expert who represents a division shall be a full member of the Group, with voting rights";

(b) Rule 22 was changed to read:

"A person with specialized knowledge of particular aspects of the standardization of geographical names may be invited to place before the Group of Experts his/her specialized knowledge. Such a person will be invited only when official approval of the invitation has been obtained from his/her Government".

For the revised text of the rules of procedure, as amended, see annex III below.

## AGENDA FOR THE SESSION

2. The Group adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Reports of the Working Groups
4. Organization of the Fourth Conference
5. Review of aims and functions
6. Review of the modus operandi
7. Adoption of the rules of procedure
8. Election of officers
9. Review of Conference recommendations
10. Programme for the Group of Experts
11. Review of the Working Groups
12. Eleventh session of the Group of Experts
13. Other business

## REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

7. At its meeting on 23 August, the Group of Experts considered the reports of the Working Groups which were to be presented to the Fourth Conference.

8. It was agreed that the reports of the Working Groups, as contained in the report of the Group of Experts, on its ninth session (see ESA/RT/C/GI/7, paras. 26-33) should serve as the basis for discussion during the Fourth Conference. It was also agreed that the reports would be presented to the Conference by the convenors of the Working Groups or, in their absence, by the rapporteurs.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE FOURTH CONFERENCE

9. It was announced that the election of the president of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names would take place during the first plenary meeting. It was also proposed to establish an editorial committee, the chairman of which would also be appointed an officer of the Conference.

10. It was agreed that, as had been done at the previous Conferences, five committees would be established. All delegates to the Fourth Conference would be invited to participate in the work of each committee.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

11. On 15 September 1982, the tenth session was reconvened. In accordance with rules 5 and 6 of the rules of procedure, 1/ new officers of the Group of Experts were elected: Chairman: Mr. D. P. Blok (Netherlands); Vice-Chairman: Mr Y. Velásquez (Cuba); Rapporteur: Mr. A. Rayburn (Canada).

#### REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOURTH CONFERENCE

12. The Chairman suggested reviewing the recommendations of the Conference committee by committee in order to determine the programme for the Group of Experts for the next five years and to ensure that all the recommendations were systematically reviewed.

13. Mr. Breu was invited to continue to co-ordinate the work relating to toponymic guidelines for map and other editors, and to act as a correspondent on behalf of the Group of Experts. The Secretary assured Mr. Breu that the Cartography Section would extend to him all possible assistance in that respect. The subject of amalgamating the national toponymic guidelines for map and other editors in a single volume is to be evaluated at the eleventh session of the Group of Experts.

#### PROGRAMME FOR THE GROUP OF EXPERTS

14. The Chairman encouraged the convenors of the working groups to implement the recommendations of the Conference by actively working with the members of their respective groups, and keeping the Secretary and himself advised of developments and problems.

#### WORKING GROUP ON DEFINITIONS

15. The Working Group was asked to continue its work under the chairmanship of Mr. Lewis, with Mr. Velásquez and Mr. González. Definitions are required for the terms "official language", "national language" and "mother tongue". In addition, Russian and Arabic versions of the list of definitions are required, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Division and the Arabic Division agreed to begin the development of the respective versions.

#### WORKING GROUP ON A LIST OF COUNTRY NAMES

16. It was agreed that discussion on the transfer of responsibility for the list of country names to the Documentation, Reference and Terminology Section of the United Nations Secretariat would be undertaken at the eleventh session of the Group

of Experts. Mr. Ramondou stated that he would continue to co-ordinate the work with the assistance of Mr. González, Mr. Heyda, Mr. Woodman, Mr. Komkov and Mr. Wang. Mr. Ramondou asked each of the members of the group to review the draft introduction to the list, to ascertain the exact forms for certain countries for which information is at present incomplete and to provide accurate non-Roman characters for those country names that require them.

#### WORKING GROUP ON EXTRATERRESTRIAL TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

17. It was agreed that the tasks of the Working Group had been completed and that the Working Group should be disbanded. It was noted, however, that there was still a need for liaison between the Group of Experts and the International Astronomical Union. It was therefore recommended that the convenor, Mr. Komkov, should act as a correspondent for the Group of Experts and should notify the Secretary about extraterrestrial naming activities on an annual basis.

#### WORKING GROUP ON UNDERSEA AND MARITIME FEATURES

18. The Group of Experts decided to limit the activities of the Working Group to maritime features, having agreed that the goals pertaining to undersea features had been achieved. Mr. Randall consented to maintain liaison between the Group and the International Hydrographic Organization. The renaming of the Working Group, in consequence of limiting the scope of its activities, is to be decided at the eleventh session of the Group of Experts.

#### WORKING GROUP ON A SINGLE ROMANIZATION SYSTEM FOR EACH NON-ROMAN WRITING SYSTEM

19. It was proposed that the functions of the Working Group should be extended to embrace activities relating to the conversion of Roman scripts into non-Roman scripts, such as Arabic. The Group decided, however, to await the reaction of the convenor, Mr. Földi, to the proposal and to consider the question at the eleventh session. It was agreed that Miss E. Shipley (United Kingdom) would become a member of the Working Group as an expert in Chinese.

#### WORKING GROUP ON TRAINING COURSES ON TOPONYMY

20. Experts who had lectured at the toponymic training course at Cisarua, Indonesia, in June 1982, were nominated to serve with the convenor, Mr. Ormeling. Joining him, therefore, will be Mr. Lewis, Mr. Blok and Mr. Földi. Mr. Rayburn and Mr. Beaudin will also serve on the Working Group. It was agreed that future training courses would rely extensively on the published report of the course in Indonesia as well as on the papers delivered at the course.

WORKING GROUP ON AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING AND WORKING GROUP  
ON INTERNATIONAL GAZETEERS

21. It was recommended that these two groups should be amalgamated under the title Working Group on Toponymic Data Files, since it had been agreed that the Working Group on International Gazetteers had no further need to exist independently. Mr. Lewis accepted the chairmanship of the new group and agreed to draft terms of reference for it. Mr. Marsden and Mr. Beaudin were to become members of the Working Group, joining Mr. Orth, Mr. Komkov, Mr. González, Mr. Velásquez, Mr. Rayburn, Mr. Mubita, Mr. Randall and Mr. Kanakubo. Mr. Böhme stated that he would no longer be active in the work of the Group of Experts since he had now retired.

OTHER BUSINESS

22. Considerable discussion ensued about the need for and functions of the divisions. Many experts stated that they served a very useful function in encouraging national standardization among countries with either close linguistic or geographical associations. Several others objected strenuously to the composition of some of the divisions. It was agreed that the subject of divisions and their composition should be fully explored at the eleventh session. The experts were encouraged to communicate their views to the Chairman and the Secretary.

23. The subject of preparing a single basic document on the aims, functions and modus operandi of the Group of Experts is to be considered further at the eleventh session. Mr. Koulikov accepted the responsibility of preparing a paper on the subject. Meanwhile, each expert is invited to submit his views to the Chairman and the Secretary.

24. An ad hoc working group on the duration and programme of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was set up under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur. The group is to devise a provisional agenda and a time frame for discussion at the eleventh session. Members of the ad hoc working group are Mr. Randall, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Beaudin, Mr. Blok and the Secretary of the Group of Experts.

25. Mr. Orth agreed to co-ordinate the compilation of a manual for guidelines for beginning a geographical names information file. The following experts were invited to work on his drafting committee: Mr. Velásquez, Mr. Rostvik, Mr. Böhme, Mr. Breu, Mr. Beaudin, Mr. Blok and Mr. Rayburn. The Secretary said that if a draft could be completed by April 1983, he would consider it for publication in World Cartography.

26. Mr. Tazi accepted the responsibility of co-ordinating the writing of a paper on the conversion of non-Arabic writing systems into the Arabic writing system for consideration at the eleventh session. ]

27. The matter of research and experiments in assisting in name pronunciation is to be considered at the eleventh session.

28. The Group endorsed the proposal that the eleventh session should be held preferably in 1984 at Geneva or Vienna, and that its work should be completed in no more than seven working days. It was agreed that the twelfth session should be held two years later, with the thirteenth session being convened at the same time as the Fifth Conference.

29. At the eleventh session the Secretary will request the Group to authorize him to enforce deadlines for submission of documents to United Nations conferences on standardization of geographical names. He noted that more than two thirds of the documents distributed at the Fourth Conference had been submitted after the commencement of the Conference.

30. The Secretary requested Mr. Ramondou, convenor of the Working Group on a List of Country Names, to co-ordinate the verification of nomenclature to be shown on a new world map being produced by the Cartographic Unit of the Publishing Division, Department of Conference Services, United Nations Secretariat. The following experts were invited to work with the convenor: Mr. Lewis, Mr. Heyda, Mr. Komkov, Mr. Wang and Mr. González.

31. The subject of the practical aspects of geographical names and communications, as outlined in document E/CONF.74/L.112, which was presented to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, is to be examined further at the eleventh session of the Group of Experts

#### Notes

1/ See the report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on the work of its ninth session (ESA/RT/G/GN/7), annex IV; the report was transmitted to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names under the symbol E/CONF.74/L.44.



Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Africa Central Division

(Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, United Republic of Cameroon, Zaire)

Mrs. Maria Celeste Pereira KOUNTA  
(Angola)

Expert  
Directeur du Projet Tripartit sur  
le Développement des Langues  
Nationales de la République  
populaire d'Angola  
B.P. 5614  
Luanda

Africa East Division

(Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia)

Absent

Africa West Division

(Benin, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta)

Absent

Arabic Division

(Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan)

Division Chairman: Mr. Abdelhadi TAZI  
(Morocco)

Membre de l'Académie du Royaume  
du Maroc  
Directeur  
Institut de la Recherche  
Scientifique  
Villa Baghdad, Q. Souissi  
Rabat

Mr. Ass'ad ABDO  
(Saudi Arabia)

Associate Professor in Geography  
Faculty of Arts  
King Saud University  
Riyadh

Arabic Division (continued)

Mr. Shedayed ABDOULA  
(Saudi Arabia)

General Director of Surveying and  
Cadastral Department  
Ministry of Municipal and Rural  
Affairs

Mr. Soleman S. AL-ROBAISHY  
(Saudi Arabia)

Deputy Minister of Petroleum for  
Aerial Surveys  
Ministry of Petroleum  
P.O. Box 247  
Riyadh

Asia East Division (other than China)

(Japan, Republic of Korea)

Mr. Hiroyuki MATSUDA  
(Japan)

Director  
Map Source Material Division  
Map Management Department  
Geographical Survey Institute  
Ministry of Construction  
Kitasato 1  
Yatabe-Mati-Tukuba-Gun  
Ibaraki-Ken 305

Mr. Hatsuhiro SHIGEMITSU  
(Japan)

Second Secretary  
Permanent Mission of Japan to the  
United Nations, Geneva

Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division

(Democratic Kampuchea, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia,  
Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam)

Division Chairman: Mr. Abdul Majid MOHAMED  
(Malaysia)

Deputy Director-General of Surveys  
and Mapping  
Survey Department Headquarters  
Jalan Gurney  
Kuala Lumpur 15-02

Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic)

(Afghanistan, Cyprus, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, Turkey)

Mr. Mohammad Jafar MAHALLATI  
(Islamic Republic of Iran)

Chargé d'affaires a.i.  
Permanent Mission of the Islamic  
Republic of Iran to the United  
Nations, Geneva

Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) (continued)

Mr. Jalil ZAHIRNIA  
(Islamic Republic of Iran)

Third Secretary  
Permanent Mission of the Islamic  
Republic of Iran to the United  
Nations, Geneva

+ Israel

China Division

(China)

Division Chairman: Mr. WANG Jitong  
(China)

Chief of the Geographical Names  
Division  
Research Institute of Surveying and  
Mapping  
7 Yongdinglu  
Beijing

Mr. BA Hao  
(China)

Engineer in Geographical Names  
Research Institute of Surveying and  
Mapping  
7 Yongdinglu  
Beijing

Dutch- and German-speaking Division

(Australia, Belgium, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of,  
Netherlands, Suriname, Switzerland)

Mr. Dirk P. BLOK  
(Netherlands)

Director  
P. J. Meertens Institut  
Keizersgracht 569-571  
Amsterdam-C

Mr. Rolf BÖHME  
(Federal Republic of  
Germany)

Solmsers Strasse 18  
D-6361 Niddatal 1

Mr. Erfried HAACK  
(German Democratic  
Republic)

Ministerium des Innern, Verwaltung  
Vermessungs- und Kartenwesen  
Mauerstrasse 29-32  
DDR-1086 Berlin

Mr. Rudolf KNÖPFLI  
(Switzerland)

Ingénieur  
Directeur adjoint de l'Office  
fédéral de la Topographie  
Seftigenstr. 264  
CH-3084 Wabern

East Central and South-East Europe Division

(Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Turkey, Yugoslavia)

Mr. Dušan FICOR  
(Czechoslovakia)

Slovak Office of Geodesy and  
Cartography  
Bezručová 7  
813 23 Bratislava

Mr. Mieczysław SZYMCZAK  
(Poland)

Membre de la Commission de la  
Standardisation des Noms  
Géographiques du Monde de la  
République Populaire de Pologne  
Wydział Filologii Polskiej  
Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego

India Division

(Bangladesh, India, Pakistan)

Absent

Latin America Division

(Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic,  
Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama,  
Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela)

Division Chairman:

Mr. Ydelis VELASQUEZ García  
(Cuba)

Secretario Ejecutivo  
Comisión Nacional de Nombres  
Geográficos  
Instituto Cubano de Geodesia y  
Cartografía  
Amargura No. 203  
E/Habana y Aguiar  
La Habana

Mr. Luis GALVEZ FIGARI  
(Peru)

Hidrógrafo  
Jefe del Departamento de  
Cartografía  
Dirección de Hidrografía y  
Navegación de la Marina  
Av. Gamarra No. 500  
Chucuito-Calloa

Norden Division

(Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden)

Division Chairman: Mr. Allan ROSTVIK  
(Sweden)

Director of the Institute of Place-  
Name Research (Ortnamnsarkivet)  
St. Johannesgatan 11  
S-75221 Uppsala

Ms. Eeva Maria NARHI  
(Finland)

Head of Division  
Finnish Research Centre for  
Domestic Languages  
Liisank 16 A 2  
SF-00170 Helsinki 17

Romano-Hellenic Division

(Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, France, Greece, Holy See, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco,  
Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey)

Division Chairman: Mr. J. RAMONDOU  
(France)

Ingénieur en chef géographe  
Institut Géographique National  
2 Avenue Pasteur  
F-94160 St. Mandé

Mr. François BEAUDIN  
(Canada) a/

Président  
Commission de Toponymie du Québec  
220 Grande Allée Est  
Québec, GC G1R 2J1

Mr. Andreas CHRISTOFI  
(Cyprus)

Director  
Department of Lands and Surveys  
Ministry of Interior  
Nicosia

Mr. Evangelos KOFOS  
(Greece) b/

Special Counsellor  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
1 Akadimias Street  
Athens

Mr. Alessandro TONIOLO  
(Italy)

Geocartographic Editor-in-Chief  
Touring Club Italiano  
Milano

Mr. José María  
GONZALEZ ABOIN  
(Spain) c/

Ingeniero Geógrafo  
Instituto Geográfico Nacional  
General Ibañeta de Ibero 3  
Madrid 3

---

a/ Also part of the United States of America/Canada Division.

b/ Also part of the East Central and South-East Europe Division.

c/ Also part of the Latin America Division.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Division

(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

Mr. Evgueni ARJANOV  
(USSR)

Vice-Director of Agency  
"Cartography"  
Main Department of Geodesy and  
Cartography  
14 ul. Krzhizhanovskogo  
2 Korpus  
Moscow

Mr. Victor KOULIKOV  
(USSR)

Chief of Cartography Section  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Arbat 54  
Moscow

Ms. Elena GOROVAIA  
(USSR)

Main Administration of Geodesy and  
Cartography  
14 ul. Krzhizhanovskogo  
2 Korpus  
Moscow

United Kingdom Division

(Australia, Guyana, Ireland, New Zealand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Division Chairman: Mr. H. A. G. LEWIS  
(United Kingdom)

Chairman  
Permanent Committee on Geographical  
Names for British Official Use  
(PCGN)  
1 Kensington Gore  
London, SW7 2AR

Mr. Paul J. WOODMAN  
(United Kingdom)

Secretary  
Permanent Committee on Geographical  
Names for British Official Use  
(PCGN)  
1 Kensington Gore  
London, SW7 2AR

Miss E. SHIPLEY  
(United Kingdom)

Research Assistant  
Permanent Committee on Geographical  
Names for British Official Use  
(PCGN)  
1 Kensington Gore  
London, SW7 2AR

United Kingdom Division (continued)

Mr. R. MARSDEN  
(United Kingdom)

Directorate of Military Survey  
Elmwood Avenue  
Feltham  
Middlesex TW13 7AE

United States of America-Canada Division

(Canada, United States of America)

Division Chairman: Mr. Alan RAYBURN  
(Canada) d/

Executive Secretary  
Canadian Permanent Committee on  
Geographical Names  
Department of Energy, Mines and  
Resources  
615 Booth Street  
Ottawa, Ontario

Mr. C. M. HEYDA  
(United States)

Defense Mapping Agency  
Hydrographic/Topographic Center  
6500 Brookes Lane  
Washington, D.C. 20315

Mr. Donald J. ORTH  
(United States)

Executive Secretary for Domestic  
Names  
United States Board on Geographic  
Names  
National Center 523  
Reston, Virginia 22203

Mr. R. R. RANDALL  
(United States)

Executive Secretary  
United States Board on Geographic  
Names  
Defense Mapping Agency  
Building 56, United States Naval  
Observatory  
Washington, D.C. 20305

Mrs. S. H. SHAW  
(United States)

Chairman  
Foreign Names Committee  
United States Board on Geographic  
Names  
Department of State  
2201 "C" Street, N.W., Room 8742  
Washington, D.C. 20520

---

d/ Also part of the Romano-Hellenic Division.

Annex II

LIST OF WORKING PAPERS

- Working Paper No. 1 Provisional agenda. Agenda item 2  
(English only)
- Working Paper No. 2 Report of the Working Group on Automated Data Processing.  
(English only) Agenda item 3 (submitted by R. Böhme, Federal Republic of  
Germany, Convenor of the Working Group)
- Working Paper No. 3 Rules of Procedure of the United Nations Group of Experts  
(English only) on Geographical Names. Agenda item 10
- Working Paper No. 4 Composite World Map with Standardized Geographical Names.  
(English only) Agenda item 12 (submitted by the United Nations Secretariat)
- Working Paper No. 5 Withdrawn
- Working Paper No. 6 Report of the Working Group on Maritime and Undersea  
(English only) Features. Agenda item 3 (submitted by R. Randall, United  
States Convenor of the Working Group)
- Working Paper No. 7 Report of the Asia South-East and Pacific South-West  
(English only) Division. Agenda item 3 (submitted by Abdul Majid Mohamed,  
Malaysia, Division Chairman)
- Working Paper No. 8 Rapport de la Division arabe. Agenda item 3 (submitted by  
(French only) Abdelhadi Tazi, Morocco, Division Chairman)



Annex III

**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS  
ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES\***

**I. DEFINITIONS**

Meaning of terms

Rule 1

For the purposes of these rules, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

(a) "Group" or "Group of Experts" means the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names established in pursuance of resolutions 715 A (XXVII) and 1314 (XLIV) of the Economic and Social Council, and the decision taken by the Council at its 1854th meeting, on 4 May 1973 (item 22);

(b) "Member" means an expert participating in a session of the Group, whether or not he/she represents a division;

(c) "Division" means one of the major linguistic/geographical divisions of the world, as defined in the modus operandi of the Group; a/

(d) "Secretary-General" means Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**II. MEMBERSHIP AND COMPOSITION**

Rule 2

1. The Group of Experts shall consist of experts in the field of cartography/linguistics designated by Governments of States Members of the respective divisions.

2. The expert who represents a division shall be a full member of the Group, with voting rights. In addition, Member States of the divisions may appoint national experts who may participate, without the right to vote, in the discussions at meetings of the Group. Attendance at Group meetings by the latter experts shall be co-ordinated with the expert representing the division in question, who shall have the right to vote on behalf of the division.

---

\* As adopted by the Group of Experts at its tenth session, held at the United Nations Office at Geneva, on 23 August and 15 September 1982 (see para. 5 of the present report).

3. All experts participating in sessions of the Group shall serve in their personal capacities as individuals of recognized competence and experience in their respective fields.

### III. SESSIONS

#### Rule 3

The Group shall normally hold one session every two years, at such times as it determines; provided that in years when a United Nations conference on the standardization of geographical names is held, the Group shall meet, as required, on dates immediately preceding the opening date of the conference and immediately following the closing date of the conference.

### IV. AGENDA

#### Rule 4

The provisional agenda drawn up by the Group at its previous session and communicated to the Governments invited by the Secretary-General to send experts to participate in the session shall constitute the provisional agenda for the session. Experts participating in the session may propose additional items for inclusion in the provisional agenda.

### V. OFFICERS

#### Election and term of office

#### Rule 5

The Group shall elect the following officers from among the experts representing divisions: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Rapporteur.

#### Rule 6

The officers shall be elected immediately following the closing date of the respective United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names. The officers shall serve until their successors are elected immediately after the next conference.

Replacement

Rule 7

1. If the Chairman is to be absent from a meeting or part thereof, or if he ceases to be able to perform his functions, the Vice-Chairman or, in his/her absence, the Rapporteur shall act as Chairman.

2. The Vice-Chairman or Rapporteur when acting as Chairman shall have the same powers and duties as the Chairman.

3. If either the Vice-Chairman or the Rapporteur are unable to perform the functions of their office, the Chairman shall appoint an expert to complete the unexpired portion of either term of office.

VI. SECRETARIAT

Duties of the secretariat

Rule 8

The Secretary of the Group, appointed by the Secretary-General, shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Group. He may designate a member of the secretariat to take his place at any meeting.

Rule 9

The Secretary shall as far as possible provide and direct such staff as is required by the Group. He shall be responsible for making all necessary arrangements for meetings and generally shall perform all other work which the Group may require.

Statements by the secretariat

Rule 10

The Secretary or his representative may at any meeting make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration.

VII. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Quorum

Rule 11

A majority of the representatives of divisions participating in the session shall constitute a quorum.

General powers of the Chairman

Rule 12

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him elsewhere by these rules, the Chairman shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Group, direct the discussion at such meetings, ensure the observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. He shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules, shall have complete control over the proceedings of the Group and over the maintenance of order at its meetings.

Rule 13

The Chairman may, in the course of the discussions, propose to the Group the closing of the list of speakers or the adjournment or closure of the debate. He may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the matter under discussion. The Chairman may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting.

Rule 14

The Chairman, in the exercise of his functions, remains under the authority of the Group.

Points of order

Rule 15

During the discussion of any matter, a member may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be immediately decided by the Chairman in accordance with these rules. A member may appeal against the ruling of the Chairman. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote and the Chairman's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives of divisions present and voting. A member may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Time-limit on speeches

Rule 16

The Group may limit the time allowed to each speaker and the number of times a member may speak on any question. When the debate is limited and a member exceeds his allotted time, the Chairman shall call him to order without delay.

Closing of list of speakers

Rule 17

During the course of a debate, the Chairman may announce the list of speakers:

and, with the consent of the Group, declare the list closed. The Chairman may, however, accord the right of reply to any member if, in his opinion, a speech delivered after he has declared the list closed makes this desirable. When there are no more speakers, the Chairman shall, with the consent of the Group, declare the debate closed. Such closure shall have the same effect as closure pursuant to rule 19.

#### Adjournment of debate

##### Rule 18

During the discussion of any matter, a member may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. Any such motion shall have priority. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one member shall be allowed to speak in favour of, and one member against the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote.

#### Closure of debate

##### Rule 19

A member may at any time move the closure of the debate on the item under discussion, whether or not any other member has signified his/her wish to speak. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote.

#### Withdrawal of proposals or motions

##### Rule 20

A proposal or a motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that it has not been amended. A proposal or a motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any member.

#### Reconsideration of proposals

##### Rule 21

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session unless the Group, by a two thirds majority of the representatives of divisions present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion, after which it shall be immediately put to the vote.

#### Invitations to specialists [technical advisers]

##### Rule 22

A person with specialized knowledge of particular aspects of the standardization of geographical names may be invited to place before the Group of

Experts his/her specialized knowledge. Such a person will be invited only when official approval of the invitation has been obtained from his/her Government.

### VIII. DECISION-MAKING

#### Consensus

##### Rule 23

Decisions of the Group, particularly on technical matters, shall normally be reached by consensus. In the absence of a consensus at a meeting, the Chairman may, and at the request of any member shall, put the proposal to the vote.

#### Voting rights and majority required

##### Rule 24

1. Each expert representing a division shall have one vote, and decisions the Group shall, subject to rule 23, be taken by a majority of the divisional representatives present and voting.

2. If a vote is equally divided, a second vote shall be taken after an adjournment of the meeting for 15 minutes. If this vote also results in equality the proposal or motion shall be regarded as rejected.

#### Meaning of the phrase "representatives of divisions present and voting"

##### Rule 25

For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "representatives of divisions present and voting" means representatives of divisions casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives of divisions who abstain from voting shall be considered as not voting.

#### Roll-call votes

##### Rule 26

A roll-call vote, if requested, shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the divisions, beginning with the division whose name is drawn by lot by the Chairman.

#### Conduct during voting

##### Rule 27

After the Chairman has announced the commencement of voting, no member shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. Explanations of their votes by members may, however, be

permitted by the Chairman either before or after the voting. The Chairman may limit the time to be allowed for such explanations.

### Division of proposals

#### Rule 28

Parts of a proposal shall be voted on separately if a member requests that the proposal be divided. Those parts of the proposal that have been approved shall then be put to the vote as a whole; if all the operative parts of a proposal have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered rejected as a whole.

### Order of voting on amendments

#### Rule 29

When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the Group shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote. When, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. A proposal is considered an amendment to another proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

### Order of voting on proposals

#### Rule 30

1. If two or more proposals relate to the same question, they shall, unless the Group decides otherwise, be voted on in the order in which they were submitted. The Group may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

2. Revised proposals shall be voted on in the order in which the original proposals were submitted, unless the revision substantially departs from the original proposal. In that case, the original proposal shall be considered as withdrawn and the revised proposal shall be treated as a new proposal.

3. A motion requiring that no decision be taken on a proposal shall have priority over that proposal.

### Elections

#### Rule 31

1. All elections shall be held by secret ballot unless the Group decides otherwise.

2. When candidates are to be nominated, each nomination shall be made by only one member, after which the Group shall immediately proceed to the election.

Balloting

Rule 32

1. When one or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions each member may cast a vote for as many candidates as there are places to be filled, and those candidates, in a number not exceeding the number of such places, obtaining in the first ballot a majority of the votes cast and the largest number of votes shall be elected.

2. If the number of candidates so elected is less than the number of places to be filled, additional ballots shall be held to fill the remaining places. From such ballots the candidates obtaining the least number of votes in the previous ballot may be eliminated on the proposal of the Chairman.

3. In the case of a tie among candidates obtaining a majority of the votes cast, a second ballot shall be held among them. If the votes remain equally divided, the elder or eldest candidate shall be elected.

IX. LANGUAGES

Official and working languages

Rule 33

Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the official languages and English, French and Spanish shall be the working languages of the session. Working papers shall be submitted in one of the working languages.

Interpretation

Rule 34

1. Speeches made in an official language shall be interpreted into the other official languages of the session.

2. Any member may make a speech in a language other than an official language of the session if he provides for interpretation into one such language. Interpretation into the other official languages of the session by the interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first such language.



X. RECORDS

Records of meetings and of the session

Rule 35

Sound recordings of the plenary meetings of the session shall be made and kept by the secretariat. The Group shall prepare a final report in English as the record of the session. This report shall be distributed by the secretariat as soon as possible after the closing of the session.

XI. PRIVACY OF MEETINGS

Rule 36

The meetings of the Group and meetings of its working groups shall be held in private.

XII. SESSIONAL BODIES AND WORKING GROUPS

Sessional bodies

Rule 37

During sessions of the Group, ad hoc study groups may be appointed to deal with particular issues. Upon completion of their appointed tasks, such groups will be automatically disbanded before the end of the session, unless especially directed to remain in existence.

Intersessional Working Groups

Rule 38

The Group may establish working groups of specialists under the chairmanship of one of the national experts referred to in rule 2 to study particular problems between sessions of the Group.

Rules of procedure

Rule 39

So far as they are applicable, the rules of procedure of the Group shall apply to the proceedings of the sessional bodies and working groups. These bodies may, however, dispense with certain language interpretations.

XIII. PARTICIPATION BY NON-MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

Rule 40

1. Representatives designated by the specialized agencies and observers designated by other intergovernmental organizations and by non-governmental organizations invited to the session may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Group and its working groups upon the invitation of the Chairman or the convenor of a working group on questions within the scope of their activities.

2. Written statements submitted by these representatives or observers shall be distributed by the secretariat to all participants in the session.

XIV. AMENDMENTS

Rule 41

These rules of procedure may be amended by a decision of the Group, taken by a two thirds majority of the divisional representatives present and voting. No amendment shall become effective until it has been approved by the Economic and Social Council.

---

a/ See the appendix below; the modus operandi was transmitted to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names as E/CONF.74/L.43, annex III.

Appendix

MODUS OPERANDI OF THE UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

1. By Economic and Social Council resolution 1314 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968 and later decisions, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names has been charged with providing for continuous co-ordination and liaison among countries to further the standardization of geographical names and to encourage the formation and the work of linguistic/geographical divisions.

2. In order to achieve the results required, at both the national and the international levels, as specified in the resolutions adopted at United Nations conferences, the linguistic/geographical divisions listed below were formed:

Africa Central Division

Africa East Division

Africa West Division

Arabic Division

Asia East Division (other than China)

Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division

Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic)

China Division

Dutch and German-speaking Division

East Central and South-East Europe Division

India Division

Latin America Division

Norden Division

Romano-Hellenic Division

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Division

United Kingdom Division

United States of America/Canada Division

3. Membership of divisions

(a) A country not already a member of a division will decide for itself to which division it wishes to belong;

(b) A country may also participate in the activities of divisions other than its own provided the nature of its participation is not such as to change the linguistic/geographical character of the division.

4. (a) The Group of Experts is composed of the national experts sent by countries members of the 17 divisions;

(b) Each division will select, by methods of its own choosing, an expert to represent the division as a whole at the meetings of the Group of Experts and to speak on divisional matters at the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names.

5. The divisional representative will be responsible for ensuring that the work of the Group of Experts and its potential for technical assistance are brought to the attention of the individual countries within his division and for reporting to the United Nations any special problems within his division.

6. The divisional representative is expected to stimulate the standardization work within his division by all appropriate means, for example, correspondence (including correspondence with national surveying and mapping agencies), divisional meetings, preferably at least one every five years, etc.

7. In order to guarantee the continuity of the work, each division having more than one sovereign State should select an alternate representative; the divisional representative will act in close contact with his alternate.

8. Governments may appoint national experts to attend meetings of the Group of Experts on the understanding that the said national experts will have the right of voice and that their attendance will be co-ordinated with the expert who represents the division in question and who will vote on behalf of the division. The Group of Experts would welcome participation by countries that have not yet participated in conferences or Group of Experts sessions, especially when their language or script is to be considered.

9. The Group of Experts will elect the following officers: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Rapporteur.

10. The elections mentioned in paragraph 9 above will be held at the termination of the respective United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names. The officers will serve until their successors are elected at the next conference. The Cartography Section of the United Nations Secretariat will provide the secretariat for the Group.

11. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman will assume the office of Chairman. In the absence of the Vice-Chairman or the Rapporteur, the Chairman will appoint persons to complete the unexpired portion of their terms of office.

12. The Group of Experts will meet in accordance with the precedents set by the Economic and Social Council.

13. Agreement on technical matters will be achieved by consensus and not by voting. Voting will be reserved for matters solely of a procedural character.

14. Questions implicating national sovereignty outside the scope of standardization of geographical names are excluded from discussion in the Group.

15. Persons with special knowledge of particular aspects of the standardization of geographical names may be invited to place before the Group of Experts their specialized knowledge.

16. During the meetings of the Group of Experts, special working groups may be appointed to deal with particular issues. Upon completion of the appointed task, the working group will be automatically disbanded unless especially directed to remain in being.

17. Working groups of specialists may be formed by the Group of Experts under the chairmanship of one of the national experts referred to in paragraph 8 above to study particular problems between meetings of the Group of Experts.

18. In preparation of the meetings of the group of experts the Chairman can ask for special papers on particular topics.

19. The working languages of the United Nations selected for the conduct of business during the meetings of the Group of Experts will depend upon the nature of the representation and the facilities available at the time.

20. The Group of Experts will maintain communication among themselves. The Chairman will be responsible for communicating the results of their main activities to the Cartography Section of the United Nations Secretariat and to the members and officers of the Group.

21. Apart from communication through formal channels, experts representing divisions and also national representatives will be notified by informal means of the transactions, programmes and requirements of the Group of Experts.

22. The Group of Experts will encourage countries to supply information and assistance to countries within or outside their respective divisions and also to the Cartography Section of the United Nations Secretariat.

-----