

**Group of Experts on
Geographical Names**

Eleventh Session
Geneva, 15-23 October 1984

WORKING PAPER

No. 17

Item No. 5 of the
Provisional Agenda*

REPORT ON PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION
OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC SINCE THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN 1982

(Submitted by E. Haack, German Democratic Republic)

* WP No. 1

Since the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (Geneva, 1982) the following work has been carried out for a further standardization of the spelling of geographical names in the German Democratic Republic:

1. The "Instruction on the Spelling of Geographical Names in Cartographical Products of the German Democratic Republic" (hereinafter referred to as "Instruction") was published in 1983 in its eighth revised edition. This Instruction constitutes the most important foundation for a standardized spelling of geographical names in the German Democratic Republic and is permanently up-dated. The resolutions of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the results achieved by the Working Group "List of the Names of States" at the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names serve as an essential source of completion and modification. It was by the help of the Instruction that could be achieved in the German Democratic Republic, for instance, a gradual and efficient reduction in the number of exonyms. The application of the Instruction is not limited to the production of cartographical products. It is used in other sectors, too: government authorities and institutions, publishing houses, the press, radio and television.
2. Referring to the standardized rendering of geographical names located on the national territory of the German Democratic Republic, further work was done on the spelling of physical-geographical names.
In 1982 was published a map entitled "Regional Geographical Names of the German Democratic Republic", which contains the names of landscapes, mountain ranges, ridges and lowlands. The boundaries or, respectively, the borders' midlines of these features were also entered on that map. The map

contributed essentially to the standardized and correct spelling of physical-geographical names in the German Democratic Republic.

The spelling of the towns' and villages' names is included in a publication issued in 1983 by the Staatsverlag of the German Democratic Republic, entitled "List of municipalities of the German Democratic Republic". This list contains the names of the GDR's municipalities as at 31 December 1981, the effective day of the census of population, professions, housing space and buildings. The "List of municipalities of the German Democratic Republic" is the binding foundation for spelling the names of the towns and rural communities in the German Democratic Republic.

3. In order to standardize further the spelling of names of geographical features located outside the national territory of the German Democratic Republic, the work on the series "General Directions for the Spelling of Geographical Names of Individual Countries" (hereinafter referred to as "General Directions"), which was first published in 1967, had been systematically continued.

In the period under review, such General Directions were established for the following countries: the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Part III, List of other geographical features), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, second edition, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, second edition. (The countries have been listed in accordance with the chronological sequence in which the General Directions were published.) The preparations for the publication of the General Directions for the Mongolian People's Republic and the Republic of Cuba are under way.

In drawing up or revising the General Directions, special attention was given to the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names. The "Toponymic guidelines" published by

individual countries and handed over during the last Conference are of special value for drawing up these materials.

Referring to item 9 of the provisional agenda of this session, it is pointed out that in regard of the correct pronouncing of geographical names in 1982 the VEB Hermann Haack, Geographisch-Kartographische Anstalt Gotha has published a paper by Heinrich Täubert entitled "Geographical names - correctly pronounced". This paper may be considered a contribution of the German Democratic Republic to this subject matter.

4. In accordance with resolution 24 of the Geneva Conference, (1982), in the period under review the German Democratic Republic sent observers to the meetings of the Regional Language Group of East, Central and South-East Europe.
5. All things considered, it can be said that the German Democratic Republic commenced with the realisation of the resolutions of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (Geneva, 1982). This applies primarily to resolutions 2, 4, 5, 7, 20 and 24. The resolutions 7 (Standardization of physical-geographical names) and 20 (Reduction in the number of exonyms) initiated by the German Democratic Republic, have been implemented in the German Democratic Republic. The documents published in the German Democratic Republic under the auspices of the Administration for Surveying and Cartography of the Ministry of the Interior, which take into account the mentioned resolutions of the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names, have contributed to a further standardization of the spelling of geographical names in the German Democratic Republic. This work will systematically and uninterruptedly be continued.

Finally, attention should be drawn to an international activity in the German Democratic Republic related to the tasks concerning standardization of geographical names. From 13 to 17 August 1984 the Fifteenth International Congress on Onomatology takes place at Karl-Marx-University of Leipzig. Section 7 of the Congress "Proper Names in Cartographical Products and in International Communication" deals with the following topics:

- rendering of proper names in cartographical products;
- the role of exonyms and ways to reduce them;
- tasks and results of national and international standardization of geographical names.

On the occasion of this Congress, representatives of the German Democratic Republic inform about individual results and problems of standardization of geographical names in the German Democratic Republic. The contributions will be published in the documents of the Congress.