

Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

New York, 8-17 August 2017



United Nations • New York, 2017



Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

Contents

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Organization of the work of the Conference	4
A. Terms of reference	4
B. Opening of the Conference	4
C. Attendance	4
D. Election of the President	4
E. Organizational matters	4
1. Adoption of the rules of procedure	4
2. Adoption of the agenda	4
3. Election of officers other than the President	6
4. Organization of work	6
5. Credentials of representatives to the Conference	7
F. Documentation	7
II. Summary of the work of the Conference	8
A. Plenary meetings	8
B. Technical Committee I	10
C. Technical Committee II	12
D. Technical Committee III	12
E. Technical Committee IV	13
F. Special presentations	14
G. Panel discussions	16
III. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention . . .	17
XI/1. Future organization and methods of work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names	17
XI/2. Next meeting of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names	19
XI/3. Romanization of Arabic geographical names	19
XI/4. Expression of thanks	20

Chapter I

Organization of the work of the Conference

A. Terms of reference

1. The Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was held at United Nations Headquarters from 8 to 17 August 2017, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2016/259.

B. Opening of the Conference

2. The Director of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat opened the Conference.

C. Attendance

3. The Conference was attended by 278 participants. The list of participants is available in document [E/CONF.105/INF/4](#).

D. Election of the President

4. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August 2017, the Conference elected, by acclamation, as President of the Conference, Ferjan Ormeling (Netherlands), who gave a welcoming address.

5. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Director of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

E. Organizational matters

1. Adoption of the rules of procedure

6. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August 2017, the Conference adopted its provisional rules of procedure, as contained in document [E/CONF.105/2](#).

2. Adoption of the agenda

7. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August, the Conference adopted its provisional agenda ([E/CONF.105/1](#)). The agenda as adopted was as follows:

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President of the Conference.
3. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the rules of procedure;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Election of officers other than the President;
 - (d) Organization of work;
 - (e) Credentials of representatives to the Conference.

4. Reflection on the past, present and future: the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.
5. Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference (for distribution only).
6. Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams since the Tenth Conference.
7. National and international meetings, conferences, symposiums, publicity and publications.
8. Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits.
9. National standardization:
 - (a) Field collection of names;
 - (b) Office treatment of names;
 - (c) Treatment of names in multilingual areas;
 - (d) Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures;
 - (e) Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
10. Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous, minority and regional language names).
11. Exonyms.
12. Toponymic data files and gazetteers:
 - (a) Content requirements and standards;
 - (b) Data management and interoperability;
 - (c) Data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services).
13. Terminology in the standardization of geographical names.
14. Writing systems and pronunciation:
 - (a) Romanization;
 - (b) Conversion into non-Roman writing systems;
 - (c) Writing of names in unwritten languages;
 - (d) Pronunciation.
15. Country names.
16. Toponymic education.
17. Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation:
 - (a) Features common to two or more nations;
 - (b) Bilateral/multilateral agreements.
18. Arrangements for the Twelfth Conference.

19. Adoption of resolutions of the Conference.
20. Adoption of the report of the Conference.
21. Closing of the Conference.

3. Election of officers other than the President

8. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August, the Conference elected the following officers:

Vice-Presidents:

Brahim Atoui (Algeria)
Andreas Hadjiraftis (Cyprus)

Rapporteur:

Peder Gammeltoft (Denmark), assisted by Wendy Shaw (New Zealand)

Editor-in-Chief:

Trent Palmer (United States of America), assisted by Eman Oriebay (Egypt)

4. Organization of work

9. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August, the Conference approved its proposed organization of work (English only)¹ and established four technical committees. The Conference also elected the officers and allocated agenda items to the technical committees as follows:

Technical Committee I (items 9 and 10)

Chair:

Annette Torensjö (Sweden)

Vice-Chair:

Sungjae Choo (Republic of Korea)

Rapporteur:

Leila Mattfolk (Sweden), assisted by Gerhard Rampl (Austria)

Technical Committee II (item 12)

Chair:

Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu (Germany)

Vice-Chair:

Rizka Windiastuti (Indonesia)

Rapporteur:

Allison Dollimore (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Technical Committee III (items 11, 14 and 15)

Chair:

Peter Jordan (Austria)

Vice-Chair:

Kohei Watanabe (Japan)

Rapporteur:

Catherine Cheetham (United Kingdom)

¹ Available from <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html>.

Technical Committee IV (items 13, 16 and 17)*Chair:*

Leo Dillon (United States)

Vice-Chair:

Naima Friha (Tunisia)

Rapporteur:

Susan Birtles (Australia)

10. Items 1 to 8 and 18 to 21 were considered in plenary meeting.

5. Credentials of representatives to the Conference

11. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 8 August, the Conference agreed, in accordance with rule 3 of the rules of procedure, that the Credentials Committee would be composed of the President, the two Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur, supported by a representative of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It also decided that the Committee would examine the credentials of representatives and report to the plenary without delay.

12. At the 15th plenary meeting, on 17 August 2017, the Credentials Committee reported that the credentials of the representatives had been found to be in order.

F. Documentation

13. The list of documents and the conference room papers and reports before the Conference are available on the web page of the Eleventh Conference (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html>).

Chapter II

Summary of the work of the Conference

A. Plenary meetings

14. At the 1st meeting, on 8 August 2017, the President drew the attention of the Conference to former members of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names who had passed away since the Tenth Conference. These included Ojārs Bušs of Latvia, Richard Randall III of the United States of America, Allan Rostvik of Sweden and Abdelhadi Tazi of Morocco.

Reflection on the past, present and future: the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (item 4)

15. The Conference considered item 4 at its 1st, 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 8 and 9 August 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.49](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.59](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.79](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.122](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.148](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.159](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.160](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.161](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.163](#). At its 1st meeting, the Conference heard a presentation by the representative of Canada (on behalf of the Bureau of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names). At its 2nd meeting, the Conference heard presentations by the representatives of Denmark (on behalf of the Norden Division), Austria (on behalf of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division), Latvia (on behalf of the Baltic Division), Jordan (on behalf of the Arabic Division), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the Bureau of the Group of Experts) and Denmark (on behalf of the Bureau). At its 3rd meeting, the Conference heard a presentation by the Chair of the Group of Experts. The representatives of Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Norway and Sweden and the liaison officer of the International Consortium of Universities for Toponymic Education made comments and raised questions.

16. Special presentations were given by the Co-Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the President of the Conference and the representative of Canada.

17. The President of the Conference introduced a draft resolution entitled “Future organization and methods of work of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names”, contained in conference room paper [E/CONF.105/CRP.163](#) and proposed that the Chair of the Group of Experts, William Watt (Australia), serve as facilitator of the informal consultations on that draft resolution. Consultations and negotiations were held on the draft resolution and resulted in the revised draft resolution [E/CONF.105/L.3](#).

Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference (item 5)

18. The Conference considered item 5 at its 14th meeting, on 16 August 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it, for information, 44 conference room papers ([E/CONF.105/CRP.7](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.9](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.14](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.22](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.24](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.25](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.28](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.30](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.31](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.33](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.35](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.37](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.48](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.51](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.53](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.55](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.57](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.61](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.65](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.75](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.76](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.81](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.82](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.86](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.89](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.93](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.95](#),

[E/CONF.105/CRP.96](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.97](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.103](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.107](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.117](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.118](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.119](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.120](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.121](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.128](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.138](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.139](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.143](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.144](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.145](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.151](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.156](#)).

Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams since the Tenth Conference (item 6)

19. The Conference considered item 6 at its 11th and 12th meetings, on 15 August 2017.

20. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, 22 conference room papers ([E/CONF.105/CRP.8](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.12](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.23](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.27](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.41](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.42](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.50](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.52](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.54](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.60](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.68](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.83](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.84](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.102](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.108](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.110](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.129](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.147](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.149](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.150](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.155](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.163](#)). At its 11th meeting, the Conference heard a presentation by the representatives of Cameroon, France, Germany, Poland, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The President and the representatives of Algeria and Canada made comments and raised questions. At its 12th meeting, the Conference heard presentations by the representatives of Austria, Brazil, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Panama, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, South Africa and the United States of America. The President and the representatives of Algeria and Canada made comments and raised questions.

National and international meetings, conferences, symposiums, publicity and publications (item 7)

21. The Conference considered item 7 at its 3rd meeting, on 9 August 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.15](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.19](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.64](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.92](#), and, for information, papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.130](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.131](#). The Conference heard presentations by the representatives of Latvia and the International Hydrographic Organization, the Chair of the International Cartographic Association, the Joint International Geographical Union/International Cartographic Association Commission on Toponymy and the liaison officer of the International Cartographic Association. The representatives of Austria, Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation made comments and raised questions. Statements were made by the representatives of Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits (item 8)

22. The Conference considered item 8 at its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 9 August, 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.3](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.6](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.36](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.132](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.158](#). At its 3rd meeting, the Conference heard presentations by the secretariat of the Group of Experts and the representatives of Egypt and New Zealand. At its 4th meeting the Conference heard presentations by the convenor of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation (Republic of Korea) and the representatives of

Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the Bureau of the Group of Experts).

23. The representatives of Algeria, Australia, Cyprus, Germany, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Panama and the State of Palestine made comments and raised questions.

Arrangements for the Twelfth Conference (item 18)

24. At its 14th meeting, on 16 August 2017, the Conference accepted the proposal of the President of the Conference (Netherlands) not to discuss this item, given the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council on the future organization and methods of work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (chap. III, resolution XI/2).

Closing of the Conference (item 21)

25. At the 16th plenary meeting, on 17 August 2017, the Director of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs gave concluding remarks. The President subsequently declared the Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names closed.

Actions taken by the Conference

Adoption of resolutions of the Conference (item 19)

26. At the 15th plenary meeting, on 17 August 2017, the Rapporteur read the text of the draft resolutions. The Conference adopted four resolutions emanating from the plenary and the technical committees (see chap. III below). The representative of the Republic of Korea made a statement, indicating that, until the Economic and Social Council adopts draft resolution [E/CONF.105/L.3](#), the existing arrangements for the Twelfth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names Conference would continue to be in effect.

Adoption of the report of the Conference (item 20)

27. At its 16th plenary meeting, on 17 August 2017, the Conference considered item 20 and reviewed the text of the draft report of the Conference submitted by the Rapporteur of the Conference (English only).

28. The Conference adopted the draft report contained in document [E/CONF.105/L.2](#), as orally amended, and decided to entrust the Rapporteur with finalizing the report, with the support of the Secretariat.

B. Technical Committee I

National standardization (item 9)

29. Technical Committee I considered item 9 at the 4th to 7th meetings, from 9 to 11 August 2017.

Field collection of names (item 9 (a))

30. For its consideration of item 9 (a), Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.29](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.72](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.85](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.105](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.115](#). The Committee heard presentations by the representatives of China, Indonesia (two papers) and Oman.

The Chair of the Committee (Sweden) and the representatives of Algeria, Singapore, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America raised questions and made comments.

Office treatment of names (item 9 (b))

31. For its consideration of item 9 (b), Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.69](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.74](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.77](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.87](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.104](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.133](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.153](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.154](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.157](#). The Committee heard presentations by the representatives of Algeria, China, Finland, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, South Africa (two papers), Sweden and the United States of America. The Chair of the Committee (Sweden) and the representatives of Australia, Austria, Botswana, Estonia, Germany, India, Latvia, the State of Palestine, Sweden, Tunisia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland raised questions and made comments.

Treatment of names in multilingual areas (item 9 (c))

32. No papers were submitted under this item.

Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures (item 9 (d))

33. For its consideration of item 9 (d), Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.21](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.73](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.99](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.134](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.135](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.152](#). The Committee heard presentations by the representatives of Austria, Canada, the Republic of Korea (two papers), South Africa and Sweden. The Chair of the Committee (Sweden) and the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Norway, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America raised questions and made comments.

Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors (item 9 (e))

34. For its consideration of item 9 (e), Technical Committee I had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.26](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.32](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.43](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.78](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.80](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.109](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.142](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.146](#) and, for information, conference room paper [E/CONF.105/CRP.164](#). The Committee heard presentations by the Coordinator of Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use and the representatives of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Malaysia, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Chair of the Committee (Sweden) and the representatives of Austria, Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland raised questions and made comments.

Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous, minority and regional language names) (item 10)

35. Technical Committee I considered item 10 at the 7th and 8th meetings, on 11 August 2017. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.38](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.44](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.56](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.70](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.88](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.94](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.98](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.101](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.106](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.111](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.140](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.141](#) and, for information, conference room

paper [E/CONF.105/CRP.11](#). The Committee heard presentations by the representatives of Austria, Canada, China, Estonia (two papers), Germany, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), New Zealand, Norway (two papers) and the State of Palestine. The Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, the Chair (Sweden) and Vice-Chair (Republic of Korea) of the Committee and the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Austria, Botswana, Canada, Denmark, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sweden and Tunisia raised questions and made comments.

C. Technical Committee II

Toponymic data files and gazetteers (item 12)

36. Technical Committee II considered item 12 at the 8th and 9th meetings, on 11 and 14 August 2017.

Content requirements (item 12 (a))

37. No papers were submitted under this item.

Data management and interoperability (item 12 (b))

38. For its consideration of item 12 (b), Technical Committee II had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.40](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.100](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.136](#). The Committee heard presentations by the representatives of Australia, Canada and Germany. The Chair of the Committee (Germany) and the representatives of India, Indonesia, Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the observer from Google raised questions and made comments.

Data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services) (item 12 (c))

39. For its consideration of item 12 (c), Technical Committee II had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.34](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.39](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.46](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.47](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.58](#). The Committee heard presentations by the representatives of Cyprus, Germany and Japan. The Chair (Germany) and the representatives of Austria, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Estonia, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America raised questions and made comments. The representative of Turkey made a statement, to which the representative of Cyprus replied.

D. Technical Committee III

40. Technical Committee III considered items 11, 14 and 15 at the 9th to 11th meetings, on 14 and 15 August 2017.

Exonyms (item 11)

41. For its consideration of item 11, Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.16](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.17](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.18](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.45](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.62](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.112](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.116](#). The Committee heard presentations by the representatives of Austria (three papers), Germany, Indonesia and Poland. The Chair of the Committee (Austria) and the representatives of Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom of

Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the International Consortium of Universities for Toponymic Education raised questions and made comments.

Writing systems and pronunciation (item 14)

Romanization (item 14 (a))

42. For its consideration of item 14 (a), Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.63](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.137](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.125](#). The Committee heard presentations by the Coordinator of the Task Team for Africa (Algeria), the Chair of the Arabic Division (Jordan) and the representatives of Poland. The Chair of the Committee (Austria) and the representatives of Algeria, Estonia, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia raised questions and made comments.

Conversion into non-Roman writing systems (item 14 (b))

43. For its consideration of item 14 (b), Technical Committee III had before it, for information, conference room paper [E/CONF.105/CRP.71](#). Statements were made by the Chair of the Committee (Austria) and the representatives of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Writing of names in unwritten languages (item 14 (c))

44. For its consideration of item 14 (c), Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room paper [E/CONF.105/CRP.123](#). The Committee heard a presentation by the coordinator of the Task Team for Africa (Algeria). The Chair of the Committee (Austria) and the representative of South Africa raised questions and made comments.

Pronunciation (item 14 (d))

45. No papers were submitted under this item.

Country names (item 15)

46. For its consideration of item 15, Technical Committee III had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.13](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.113](#). The Committee heard presentations by the convenor of the Working Group on Country Names (United States of America) and the representatives of Indonesia. The Chair of the Committee (Austria) and the representatives of Australia, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Tunisia, Turkey and the United States of America raised questions and made comments. The representative of Greece made a statement.

E. Technical Committee IV

Terminology in the standardization of geographical names (item 13)

47. Technical Committee IV considered items 13, 16 and 17 at the 13th and 14th meetings, on 16 August 2017. For its consideration of these items, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room paper [E/CONF.105/CRP.124](#). The Conference heard a presentation by the representative of Algeria. The representatives of Algeria, Austria, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America made comments and raised questions.

Toponymic education (item 16)

48. The Committee considered item 16 at the 13th meeting, on 16 August 2017. For its consideration of this item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room papers [E/CONF.105/CRP.66](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.67](#), [E/CONF.105/CRP.127](#) and [E/CONF.105/CRP.162](#). The Conference heard presentations by the representatives of the Netherlands and the International Consortium of Universities for Toponymic Education. The representatives of Algeria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Viet Nam made comments and raised questions.

Features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation (item 17)

49. The Committee considered item 17 at the 13th and 14th meetings, on 16 August 2017.

Features common to two or more nations (item 17 (a))

50. No papers were submitted under this item.

51. The representatives of Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan and the Republic of Korea made comments in relation to this item. Statements were made by the representatives of Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Bilateral/multilateral agreements (item 17 (b))

52. For its consideration of this item, the Conference had before it, for presentation, conference room paper [E/CONF.105/CRP.144](#). The Conference heard a presentation by the representative of Indonesia. The representatives of the Netherlands and Tunisia made comments and raised questions.

F. Special presentations

53. During the Conference, special presentations were given on the following themes:

(a) “United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management”, delivered at the 1st meeting by the Co-Chair of the Initiative, Timothy Trainor (United States of America). The President and the representatives of Australia, Azerbaijan, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, Norway, South Africa and the State of Palestine made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(b) “A reflection of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names capacity-building programme and communication and publication activities”, delivered at the 2nd meeting by the President of the Conference and the representative of Canada. The representatives of Cyprus and the observer from the International Consortium of Universities for Toponymic Education made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(c) “Building a map for everyone”, delivered at the 3rd meeting by the observer from Google, Ethan Russell. The President, the Rapporteur and the representatives of Australia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the State of Palestine made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(d) “Geographical names standardization in Africa: challenges and constraints”, delivered at the 4th meeting by Brahim Atoui (Algeria) and Naima Friha (Tunisia). The President and the representatives of Algeria, Botswana, India and Morocco made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(e) “New York City urban names”, delivered at the 5th meeting by a professor of the State University of New York College at Geneseo, Irena Vasiliev. The Vice-President and the representatives of Austria, Canada, Denmark, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the State of Palestine made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(f) “Positioning geospatial information to address global challenges”, delivered at the 6th meeting by a member of the secretariat of the United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, Chee Hai Teo. The President, the representatives of Australia, Cameroon, Denmark, Egypt and Finland and the observer from Google made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(g) “Mapping our seas, oceans and waterways — more important than ever”, delivered at the 7th meeting by the Assistant Director of the International Hydrographic Organization, Yves Guillam. The President and the representatives of Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States of America made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(h) “Field names in the Tyrol — collection, standardization and cultural aspects”, delivered at the 9th meeting by Gerhard Rampl (Austria). The President and the representatives of Algeria, Finland, Germany, Saudi Arabia and Sweden made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(i) “How the New York City data analytics team responded to and learned from a catastrophe”, delivered at the 11th meeting by the observer from Esri, Amen Ra Mashariki. The Vice-President and the representatives of Australia, India, Iraq, the Netherlands, Panama, Sri Lanka and the State of Palestine made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(j) “Global population distribution modelling: the integration of satellite and census data”, delivered at the 12th meeting by the observer of the Center for International Earth Science Information Network of Columbia University, Greg Yetman. The President and the representatives of Australia and the State of Palestine made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(k) “Maori geographic naming in New Zealand, with emphasis on the Treaty of Waitangi”, delivered at the 13th meeting by Mark Dyer (New Zealand). The President and the representatives of Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, India, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(l) “Second administrative level boundaries”, delivered at the 14th meeting by Guillaume Le Sourd of the United Nations Geospatial Information Section. The President and the representatives of Austria, Cameroon, Cyprus, Japan, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded;

(m) “Waze”, delivered at the 15th meeting by the observer from Waze, Adam Fried. The President and the representatives of Australia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the

United States of America and the State of Palestine made comments and raised questions, to which the presenter responded.

G. Panel discussions

54. During the Conference, panel discussions were held on the following topics:

(a) “National geographical names authorities”, held at the 5th meeting under item 9 (c), was chaired by the representative of Denmark. The panel comprised the representatives of Canada, Czechia, Italy, Norway and the Republic of Korea. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panellists and the representatives of Australia, Botswana, Finland, Indonesia, Latvia, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Sweden participated;

(b) “Geographical names as cultural heritage”, held at the 8th meeting under item 10, was chaired by the representative of Tunisia. The panel comprised the representatives of Algeria, Brazil, Cameroon, Denmark, Egypt, the Republic of Korea and Sweden. The panel discussions were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panellists and the representatives of Austria, Indonesia and Japan participated;

(c) “United Nations resolutions on the reduction of exonyms: witnesses of the past or guidelines still observed?”, held at the 10th meeting under item 11, was chaired by the representative of Austria. The Panel comprised the representatives of Canada, Japan, the Netherlands and Poland. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panellists and representatives of Algeria, Australia, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the United States of America participated;

(d) “Making geographical names data accessible and available”, held at the 12th meeting and under item 12, was chaired by the representative of New Zealand. The Panel comprised the representatives of Cyprus, Germany, Indonesia and New Zealand. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panellists and the representatives of Australia, Austria and Panama participated;

(e) “Writing names in so-called non-written languages”, held at the 14th meeting under item 14, was chaired by the representative of Algeria. The panel comprised the representatives of Estonia and France. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panellists and the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Cameroon, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America participated;

(f) “Support of geographical names data files and gazetteers to United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management activities such as on the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda”, under item 12, was chaired by the representative of Germany. The panel comprised the representatives of Canada, Denmark, Egypt and Tunisia. The panel presentations were followed by brief comments and question-and-answer periods, in which the panellists and the representatives of Australia, India and Japan participated.

Chapter III

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

XI/1. Future organization and methods of work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

The Conference

Recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following resolution:

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 715 A (XXVII) of 23 April 1959, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to set up a small group of consultants to consider technical problems, to draft recommendations for the domestic standardization of geographical names and to report to the Council,

Taking note of the first report of that group, in which the group stated that it was imperative to hold an international conference on the standardization of geographical names, and of the subsequent decisions of the Economic and Social Council on convening the conferences,

Recalling also its decision 1314 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, in which it approved the terms of reference for the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which was later renamed the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names by the decision taken by the Council at its 1854th meeting, on 4 May 1973,

Reaffirming the aims of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, derived from decision 1314 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, in particular the aim to emphasize the importance of the standardization of geographical names at the national and international levels and to demonstrate the benefits to be derived from such standardization,

Recalling that, in its decision 1988/116 of 25 May 1988, the Council approved the statute and rules of procedure of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and that, in its decisions 1993/226 of 12 July 1993 and 2002/307 of 25 October 2002, it approved new versions of the statute,

Taking into account General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and stressing the importance of the implementation of this new ambitious Agenda, including the relevance of the standardization of geographical names,

Recalling decision 29/101 of 29 April 2016² of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, in which the Group of Experts welcomed the initiative of the Bureau of the Group of Experts to reflect on how the working modalities of the Group of Experts could be improved, took note of the specific proposals that had been made by the Bureau and agreed that it was useful to periodically review the working methods of the Group of Experts in order to respond effectively to evolving policy needs and the changing information and communications technology environment,

Recalling also its resolution 2016/27 of 27 July 2016 on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management, in which it stressed the need to strengthen the coordination and coherence of global geospatial

² See [E/2016/66](#), sect. I.B.

information management, in capacity-building, norm-setting, data collection, data dissemination and data sharing, among others, through appropriate coordination mechanisms, including in the broader United Nations system, building on the work of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management,

Emphasizing the breadth of experience in and the contribution of the Group of Experts towards the standardization and administration of geographical names at the national, regional and global levels, its impact across all global development themes, and the need to continue its work programme,

Recognizing that a robust, voluntary, participatory and integrated mechanism and structure consisting of working groups and linguistic and geographical divisions within a modern framework with revised methods of work will result in operational efficiencies and cost savings to Member States and across the United Nations system,

1. *Decides* that the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names will be discontinued in their current formats, be subsumed by a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council that will retain their respective mandates, where relevant, as well as resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and responsibility for the implementation thereof, be named the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which will be composed of representatives of Member States of the United Nations, including experts appointed by Governments, and will focus on technical issues associated with the standardization of geographical names that may, where appropriate, support relevant aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2. *Also decides* that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names will convene biennial sessions, in principle, over a period of five days, beginning in 2019, with the full authority to set its strategic direction and adopt resolutions to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and to be able to address the needs of a rapidly changing and expanding technical environment in a timely manner;

3. *Further decides* that the Group of Experts will convene its sessions in New York, with the option to convene sessions at an alternative United Nations venue or in a specific country, should a Member State commit to hosting and funding the session;

4. *Reaffirms* the need to consider ways to avoid duplication and overlapping of efforts, if any, as well as to strengthen the joint work between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, taking into account that places and geospatial objects referred to by geographical names should have a geospatial location established through the global geodetic reference frame;

5. *Decides* that the elected Bureau of the Group of Experts will be maintained to oversee the 2017-2019 transition, on an exceptional basis;

6. *Also decides* that the rules of procedure will be drafted by the Bureau, in close consultation with the States Members of the United Nations, and be presented to the Economic and Social Council for adoption, in line with the procedures of relevant Economic and Social Council bodies, in advance of the first session of the Group of Experts, and that these rules will be the subject of an open negotiation process and will cover, among other matters, the following points:

- (a) Identification of the structure of the Bureau, election methods and terms of service;
- (b) Operational structure of the Group of Experts, including the role and scope of any plenary sessions, technical committees, working groups or divisional structures aimed at providing support for countries with regard to developing and refining programmes for the standardization of geographical names;
- (c) Development of a draft agenda for the first session, reflecting, wherever possible, the agendas of the most recent session of the Group of Experts and the most recent United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names;
- (d) Ongoing review processes with regard to the structure and methods of work of the Group of Experts;
- (e) Participation.

XI/2. Next meeting of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

The Conference,

Noting the achievements and the progress made in the work of standardization of geographical names at the national and international levels,

Noting also the essential role played by the present Conference and by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names at its thirtieth session,

Recognizing the necessity of continuing this important work with the support of the Economic and Social Council,

1. *Recommends* to the Economic and Social Council that the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names convene a series of meetings over a five-day period, from 29 April to 3 May 2019, the operational modalities of which are subject to the Council's approval of resolution XI/1 of 17 August 2017;

2. *Invites* the Bureau of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names to initiate a process of reflection on how to further improve the working methods of the Conference and its report for the next session.

XI/3. Romanization of Arabic geographical names

The Conference,

Considering resolution II/8 on the romanization of Arabic geographical names,

Noting the system adopted by Arabic experts at the conference held in Beirut in 2007, the Unified Arabic Transliteration System,

Noting also the practical amendments and corrections carried out and agreed upon by the representatives of the Arabic-speaking countries at the Fourth Arab Conference on Geographical Names, held in Beirut in 2008,

Knowing that many Arab States have issued their official valid decisions on the adoption of the system so that it has become applied and stable in those countries,

Recommends the adoption of the Unified Arabic Transliteration System (Beirut 2007 system), as set out in the document entitled "Romanization system from

Arabic letters to Latinized letters 2007”, with clarifications and amendments in paragraphs 1, 3, 5 and 6 of annex I thereto with regard to the romanization of the geographical names within those Arabic-speaking countries where the system has officially been adopted.

XI/4. Expression of thanks

The Conference,

1. *Extends its heartfelt thanks* to the United Nations for the excellent arrangements and services provided for the Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names;

2. *Expresses its gratitude* in particular to the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat for its excellent organization of Conference-related matters and of the associated technical exhibition;

3. *Also expresses its gratitude* to the President of the Conference and the Chairs of the technical committees for the effective way in which they conducted the meetings;

4. *Expresses* its appreciation to the officers of the Conference and technical committees and to the officers and staff of the Statistics Division for their hard work and dedication, which greatly facilitated the business of the Conference.



Please recycle 