



Economic and Social Council

Distr.  
LIMITED

E/CONF.74/L.88  
26 August 1982

ENGLISH ONLY

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Fourth United Nations Conference on the  
Standardization of Geographical Names  
Geneva, 24 August to 14 September 1982  
Item 6(a) of the provisional agenda\*

TOPONYMIC EDUCATION AND PRACTICE:  
EXISTING EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

Training of Specialists on the Standardization  
of Geographical Names

Paper presented by the Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics 1/

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\* E/CONF.74/1

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FOURTH UN CONFERENCE ON THE  
STANDARDIZATION OF  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Geneva, August 24 - September<sup>17</sup>, 1982  
Item 6a of the provisional agenda

ON THE TRAINING OF THE SPECIALISTS  
IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Submitted by the Government of  
the Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics

## ON THE TRAINING OF THE SPECIALISTS IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Treatment of geographical names aimed at their standardization requires rather unique professional training of those engaged in it. Staff members of the service must have a good command of the language of the country or territory whose place-names they study and preferably have additional training in the history of the language. It is necessary for them to know the geography of the studied region, its ethnic structure at present as well as in the past, the history of its people and the toponymic system of the region on the whole. They are also expected to have acquaintance with the toponymy and ethnography of the adjacent territories. Besides it is natural for them to know the rules for rendering names of a given territory into Russian (or any other language) thoroughly and to know the system of toponymic and geographic terminology in the native language. They must be able to read a map and to make use of necessary reference books. They must be able to evaluate sources of information on names accurately.

The whole complex of comprehensive knowledge cannot be obtained in a single higher school. That is why the service is staffed with specialists with different professional training: linguists, cartographers, geographers, historians. Within the bounds of the service all necessary additional training is arranged usually by means of the most proficient and skilled staff members or specialists from other services. Special courses in history and ethnography of countries and territories, the learning of the languages of the USSR peoples and of foreign countries, studying the scientific essentials of toponymy as well as seminars on cartography and map reading are organized.

Besides while any work is being carried out (dictionaries of geographical names, instructions for rendering names or any other directories etc.) it is always supervised from methodic and scientific point of view by senior staff members. The work is necessarily discussed collectively at different stages of its accomplishing. It serves as a very good training for the young personnel.

So the whole system of professional training of the staff members having the necessary minimum of basic knowledge is provided by the service itself in the process of performing its primary duties.