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FOURTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE  
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES  
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Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS  
AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF  
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE  
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Report of the Norden Division of the United Nations Group of Experts  
on Geographical Names

Paper presented by the Norden Division of the United Nations Group  
of Experts on Geographical Names

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### Summary

Since the Third Conference the Division has met once.

Two symposia dealing with problems in standardizing geographical names have been arranged in the period.

A new orthography for the North Lappish Dialect spoken in Norway, Sweden and Finland has been adopted by the three countries and will be used for North Lappish names on official maps.

A new list of "Names of countries and words for nationality" has been published by the Boards on Language Planning in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

The Danish Place-Name Commission has published a "List of place-names in the counties east of the Little Belt".

Toponymic guidelines for cartography have been prepared by all Norden countries.

In Norway and Sweden commissions have been appointed with the instructions to work out general outlines for the standardization of geographical names. In both countries the commissions will propose that authoritative place-name boards be set up.

### Meeting of the Division

Since the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Division has met once, in Oslo, Norway, in February 1978. The meeting was attended by delegates from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Questions concerning gazetteers and training courses were discussed. Mr. A. Rostvik, Sweden was elected chairman of the Division, succeeding Mr. P. Hovda, Norway.

### Symposia

On 23-25 September 1977, a symposium entitled "Place-Name Preservation and Place-Name Planning" was held in Helsinki, Finland, under the auspices of NORNA, The Nordic Co-operation Committee for Name Studies. Present were participants from all the Norden countries, representing philology, toponymy, language-planning, cartography, surveying and city-planning. The proceedings from the symposium are published in Norna-rapporter 13, Uppsala, 1978 (ISSN 0346-6728).

In May 1978, another symposium, entitled "Place-Names and Language Contact", was arranged in Uppsala, Sweden, with participants from the Norden countries, Belgium, the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands. The proceedings are published (in English or German, or with summaries in either of these languages) in NORNA-rapporter 17, Uppsala, 1980 (ISSN 0346-6728).

### International Co-operation on Orthography

In 1978, the Lapps in the northernmost parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland, who speak the North Lappish Dialect, agreed on a common orthography. In pursuance of a decision by the Ministry of Education in Norway and by the National Land Surveys of Sweden and Finland, this orthography will be used for North Lappish names on official maps in the three countries.

### List of Names of Countries

In 1979, the Boards on Language Planning in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden published a revised and enlarged edition of Statsnamn och nationalitetsord (Swedish title; "Names of Countries and Words for Nationality"), first published in 1973. The list follows the United Nations Terminology Bulletin of February 1978 and gives the names and words in Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish.

### Gazetteers

The Danish Place-Name Commission (Stednavneudvalget) has published a gazetteer, Fortegnelse over stednavne i amterne øst for Lillebaelt ("List of Place-Names in the Counties east of The Little Belt"), København, 1980, authorized by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. A Gazetteer for Jylland (Jutland) is under preparation.

In Sweden, the National Land Survey is investigating the possibility of compiling a gazetteer by ADP, based on the names on the General Map (scale 1:250 000).

In Norway, the Geographical Survey of Norway is considering a similar project, based on the Topographic Map M 711 (scale 1:50 000).

### Toponymic Guidelines for Cartography

Toponymic Guidelines for Cartography have been prepared by all Norden countries.

### Names Authorities

In Norway, the Ministry of Education in 1979 appointed a commission on place-names with instructions to analyse linguistic, legal, administrative, economic and other problems of writing Norwegian place-names, and to submit a proposal for new rules for the writing of these. The commission will present its report at the end of 1982. It will be recommended that the two name advisers (one for each form of the Norwegian language) be replaced by two consultants and a qualified secretary from each of the four Norwegian universities (Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim and Tromsø), and that two consultants for Lappish names be appointed. The total number of advisers will thus be ten. It will also be suggested that a Norwegian Place-Name Board (Norsk stadnamnråd) be set up, consisting of five of the advisers and five representatives for the Geographical Survey, the Post Office Administration, the County Survey Offices and others. The principal rule will be that place-names should be written in accordance with local pronunciation, but with due regard to general orthography.

In 1980, the Swedish Ministry of Education appointed a commission with the instruction to work out general outlines for the standardization of place-names. The commission was instructed to consider administrative problems with particular reference to the co-ordination of the decision procedures in this field. A report is due in the autumn of 1982. It will be proposed that a Place-Name Board be set up, consisting of representatives for place-name research, the National Land Survey, the Central Office of National Antiquities, the National Association of Regional Historical Societies, the Post Office Administration and the Association of Local Authorities. The aim of this board will be to lay down principles for place-name preservation; to inform governmental and local authorities and the public of these principles; to authorize Swedish gazetteers; to represent Sweden in international co-operation in the field of geographical names and to give advice in decisions upon matters of principle.

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