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NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

OFFICE TREATMENT OF NAMES

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL NAMES AUTHORITIES

Regulations on the management of geographical names in China  
promulgated by the State Council of the People's Republic  
of China

Paper submitted by China

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\* E/CONF.79/1.

REGULATIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL  
NAMES IN CHINA PROMULGATED BY THE STATE  
COUNCIL OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Submitted by China

In order to strengthen the management of geographical names and meet the requirement of the socialist modernizations in China, the State Council of the People's Republic of China promulgated on 23 January 1986 regulations on the management of geographical names in China.

The regulations give clear stipulations with regard to the following aspects: principles of giving or changing place names, competence and procedures of approval; transliteration of place names of minority languages and foreign languages into Han characters; spelling place names of China in Roman alphabets; the management of archives of geographical names; the establishment of markers of place names and the compilation and publication of the data on place names. The regulations are legislative documents which must be followed in the work of standardization of geographical names in China. The full text of the regulations is as follows.

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## REGULATIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN CHINA

Promulgated by the State Council of  
the People's Republic of China  
23 January 1986

### Article 1

These regulations are drawn up with a view to strengthening the management of geographical names in the interest of socialist modernizations and international exchanges.

### Article 2

The geographical names to which the regulations are applied include names of natural and geographical entities, administrative divisions, settlements, and stations, ports and centers which are used by various specialized departments and are of a sense of geographical names.

### Article 3

In the management of geographical names, efforts should be made to keep place names relatively stable on the basis of history and status of the names in China. When names giving or changing is necessary, it should be approved in accordance with the principles, and competence of approval stipulated by these regulations. No organization or individual is entitled to make a decision without authorization.

### Article 4

The following rules should be followed when giving name to a place:

1. Name giving should be conducive to the people's unity and socialist modernizations; respectful to the desire of the local people; and be based on consensus from all sides concerned.
2. As a rule, places are not to be named after individuals. It is forbidden to name places after names of any state leaders.
3. Repetition of names and names with homonyms should be

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avoided for those of counties, cities and above in the whole country, townships and towns within a county or a city, streets within a town, and villages within a township.

4. The names of stations, ports and centers with a sense of place names should in general be in conformity with the local place names when they are used by various specialized departments.
5. Rarely-used characters should be avoided.

#### Article 5

The following rules should be followed when changing a place name:

1. Those place names which are derogatory to the territorial sovereignty and national dignity of China, discriminatory against fraternal nationalities, detrimental to national unity, humiliating to the working people, or extremely vulgar, or against the general and specific policies of the country, must be changed.
2. Place names which are not in keeping with regulations in sections 3, 4 and 5 of article 4 should be changed with consent of the sides concerned and the local people.
3. If a place has several names or a name has several written forms, a standard name and written form should be determined.
4. Place names should not be changed when they are not within the above-mentioned framework, of no great necessity and not agreed by the local people for change.

#### Article 6

The competence and procedures of approval for giving or changing place names are as follows:

1. Decisions to give or change names of administrative divisions should be made according to the Rules on the Management of Administrative Divisions in China issued by the State Council.
2. Decisions to give or change names of natural and geographical entities such as mountain ranges, rivers and lakes, which are well-known at home and abroad or involve geographically more than two provinces (autonomous regions

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- and municipalities directly under the central government), shall be submitted to the State Council for approval, by the people's governments of the provinces, autonomous regions or municipalities.
3. Decisions to give or change names of natural and geographical entities and settlements, concerning the alignment of boundary line in border areas, and the boundary line of the ownership of islands at sea and which have been written in boundary treaties and boundary protocols, shall be submitted to the State Council for approval, by the people's governments of the provinces, autonomous regions or municipalities.
  4. Decisions to give names to new geographical entities in international public areas during scientific investigations, shall be submitted to the State Council for approval, by the departments responsible for the work.
  5. Decisions to give or change names of stations, ports and centers, which are used by various specialized departments and are of a sense of geographical names, shall be submitted for approval to the departments responsible for the work after getting consent from the local people's government.
  6. Decisions to give or change names of towns and streets shall be submitted to the people's governments of municipalities, cities and counties for approval.
  7. For other place names, procedures of approval shall be made by the people's governments of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government.
  8. The work of giving or changing place names may be undertaken by geographical names organizations and departments in charge of geographical names work, by some other departments. If it is done by other departments, they should consult with geographical names organizations or departments in charge of geographical names work.

#### Article 7

Transliteration of geographical names into Han characters from minority languages or foreign languages should be standardized. The rules of transliteration shall be drawn up by China Geographical Names Committee.

#### Article 8

In spelling geographical names of China in Roman alphabets, the scheme for the Chinese Phonetic Alphabet published

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by the State should be taken as the standard. The rules of spelling shall be drawn up by China Geographical Names Committee.

#### Article 9

The place names approved and decided by the people's governments at all levels shall be collected and published by department of geographical names. The names of administrative divisions may be collected and published in offprint by the civil administration departments.

The publication of books on transliteration of foreign place names should be approved by China Geographical Names Committee or compiled by China Geographical Names Committee.

When using place names, departments, groups, troops, enterprises and institutions at all levels should all follow the publications edited and published by geographical names organizations or civil administration departments.

#### Article 10

In managing archives of geographical names, rules made by China Geographical Names Committee and State Archives Bureau should be abided by.

#### Article 11

The local people's governments should instruct the departments concerned to set up markers of place names in places where necessary.

#### Article 12

Problems arising from the implementation of these regulations should be considered and given a reply by China Geographical Names Committee.

#### Article 13

These regulations take effect as of the date of their promulgation.

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