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**Reports by Governments on the situation in their
countries and on the progress made in the standardization
of geographical names since the Seventh Conference**

**Standardization of geographical names in the Republic
of Moldova**

Submitted by the Republic of Moldova**

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The international collaboration among states supposes the utilization of some adequate geographical terminologies and nomenclatures. In 1989 in the Republic of Moldova together with the adoption of unique names of the Romanian language there were elaborated laws of writing and transcription/translation into the Romanian of the geographical names of international circulation. The legiferation of endonyms and exonyms in their authentic and correct norms constitutes a remarkable realization in the actual conditions from the Republic of Moldova.

1. The practically – applied elaborations

There were elaborated rules relating to the orthography of the Romanian proper names and the norms concerning the transcription of the geographical names of international circulation into the Romanian language. The recommendations of the orthography were included in almost the first works with a normative character which appeared after 1989, the year of legislating of the statality of the Romanian language in Moldova over the Prut river (articles 1, p. 42-61; 2). A special resolution of the leading forums of the republic (3, p. 163-171) on this problem was obtained.

Until 1998 the local geographical names were often used being rusified, so to say translated: *Briceanî, Novie Mileşti, Orgeev, Soroki, Starie Dubossarî* instead of *Briceni, Mileştii Noi, Orhei, Soroca, Dubăsarii Vechi*. Until the 60-ies the official guide concerning the territorial-administrative organization of the republic included only the forms of the Bessarabian geographical names translated into Russian (4).

The exonyms, the geographical names from other languages, from the contents of other countries, were written/transliterated into Romanian also according to the criteria adopted in Russian. In such a way there were elaborated principles of writing according to the international norms of writing.

There were created and published guides, inventories, atlases, maps for the Romanian endonyms from Bessarabia (5). The most intensively used exonyms are included in the new lexicographic and encyclopedic works: “*A Political Map of the World*” and “*The Universal Dictionary of the Geographical Names*” now in the phase of elaboration.

2. The Principles of Spelling and Transcribing

The spelling of the Bessarabian endonyms was made as a result of some detailed investigations of the historical sources and of the materials of questionnaires performed immediately of the area. In such a way the traditional and correct forms being now in circulation on the whole territory of the republic, forms corresponding to the norms of spelling in force were legislated.

Transliteration of the endonyms into Russian and other languages was started from the original and correct forms of the Romanian language. We refused the vicious practice of writing the proper geographical names according to the principles of another language, of the Russian language in our case, which until 1989 was imposed to the local population as a state language. In such a way we got rid of the translated names and of the adapted and denaturated forms of spelling.

In transliterating of the exonyms into Romanian we returned back to the principles that were established long ago in the Romanian language and applied in writing with the Latin alphabet in Bessarabia before the war. We shall dwell upon some criteria concerning the reglementation of spelling/writing of the geographical names from other languages into Romanian.

The exonyms from the languages that make use of the Latin alphabet are written according to the spelling of the corresponding languages: *Bordeaux, Libreville, Munchen, Washington*. These names are pronounced as in their original languages: bordo, librăvil, munhen, uaşintă.

- The geographical names that penetrated into the Romanian language long ago and have adapted forms are being written in the traditional Romanian language: *Anglia, Florenţa, Londra, Varşovia, Viena* (for *England, Firenze, London, Warszawa, Wien*).

- The names from the languages with the cyrillic alphabet are given by means of graphical sources in the Romanian language (are transliterated): *Азов – Azov, Байкал – Baikal, Винница – Viniţa, Калуза – Kaluga, София – Sofia, Хабаровск – Habarovsk*. One must notice that the grapheme “k”(kappa) is preserved intact in transliteration. The geographical names adopted from other languages are written using the traditional forms of the Romanian language: *Bulgaria, Moscova, Нірри* (instead *България, Москва, Днепр*). In the cartographic works (atlases, maps, etc.) as well as in the encyclopaedia and in the geographical dictionaries of local usage foreign names adopted from other languages are accompanied usually by their original forms taken into parantheses. The publications of the specialities planned for international use contain at first the original names, the adapted variants being taken into parantheses.

- The geographical names from other languages with other alphabets rather than the Latin and Cyrillic ones (the Arab, Chinese, Greek, etc.) are transliterated into Romanian with the Latin letters (*Abu Dhabi, Beijing, Marrakech, Okinawa*) and are pronounced as in the languages from which they originate. Even in this case the adopted names are marked with the Romanian traditional forms (*Atena, Salonic for Athina, Thessaloniki*).

- In the investigations and descriptions of a historic character the foreign geographical names are used in their old forms, characteristic of the period when they penetrated into the Romanian language:

Plevna, Trapezunt for Bulgarian Pleven, Turkish, Trabzon. These names are usually accompanied by their actual variants or their original ones.

3. Perspective Tasks

The standardization of the Bessarabian endonyms and of the exonyms of international circulation presupposes some concrete actions and activities in the plan of investigations and practically – applicable elaborations as well as the adoption of some special decisions on the side of the leading forums of the republic.

- At first, we shall return to the traditionally – historical names of the “rebaptized” localities by the authorities in the postwar period: *Balanu instead of Malinovskoe (district of Bălți), Crihana Nouă instead of Lebedevca (Cahul), Cuza-Vodă instead of Dimitrovka (Lăpușna), Dragoș-Vodă instead of Iliciovka (Bălți), Mihai Bravu instead of Mihailovka (Soroca), Sturzeni instead of Ukrainka (Tighina).*

- The way to the artificial names of the period of proletarian culture: *Iantarnoe, Mirnoe, Pobeda, Svetlii, Uiutnoe and so on will be barred.*

- The names that symbolize the tsarist regime of administration from Bessarabia will be revised in the view of their substitution: *Alexandrovka, Ekaterinovka, Elizavetovka, Ivanovka, Nikolaevka* and others.

- The localities merged formerly will get back their own names: *Alexandrești* (district of Cahul), *Berești* (Ungheni), *Lunca* (Transnistria), *Manoilești* (Chișinău) and others.

- Activities of reglementation of the Romanian names of localities and places from the former southern and northern districts of Bessarabia (*Cetatea Albă, Ismail, Bolgrad, Cernăuți, Hotin*) which are now component parts of the Ukraine will be initiated.

- The transliteration of the geographical names from other languages into Romanian in accordance with the recommendations and decisions of the sessions of the group of Experts of UNO for the standardization of the geographical names will be specified.

4. Research Institutions

During last ten years the toponymical researches were developed systematically and according to the plan within the Department of Onomastics of the Institute of Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova. The investigations were performed in the following main directions: 1) the collecting and inlisting of the topical names by means of field questionnaires and documentary sources; 2) the theoretical study of the topical names and the publication of the materials and scientific works in toponymy 3) the evaluation of the national toponymic patrimony, the elaboration of the

principles of spelling and transliterating of the geographical names, the dissimination of onomastic science.

On the basis of the materials collected at the Institute of Linguistics there were created the onomastic thesauruses "*The General Toponymic Inventory*", "*The Inventory of the Entropic Terms*" and "*The Inventory of the Family Names*". These materials gave the possibility to elaborate two big common works initiated by the colleagues from Romania: "*The Entopic Dictionary of the Romanian Language*" in collaboration with the Institute of Linguistics after Iorgu Iordan of the Romanian Academy of Sciences (Bucharest) and "*The Romanian Toponymic Thesaurus. Moldova*", a work of national prestige co-ordinated by the Institute of Romanian Philology "Al.Philippide" of the Romanian Academy, the Department of Iashi.

The activity of the group of toponymists is manifested extremely complex under the aspect of practically – applicative one. The onomastic investigators participated in the elaboration of some projects of laws and official orders, created and published dictionaries, guides, methodical elaborations and recommendations concerning the correctness of proper names, performed examinations and reviews of some materials and works on onomastics, activated in the frame of scientific councils and special commissions.

5. Institutions of authorization

The supreme bodies of the state such as the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and Government of the Republic of Moldova have the right of final decision.

The Republican Commission for Reglementation and Protection of National Onomastics, the Institute of Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Moldova, the National Centre of Terminology are the institutions with the right of initiative, making proposals and recommendations concerning the problems of standardization of the geographical names.

The Department of National Relations and Functioning of languages, the Institute of Linguistics and the Institute of Geography (the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Moldova), the National Centre of Terminology are institutions of implementation and propagation of the norms of standardization and reglementation of the geographical names.

The legislative acts and the normative guides concerning the standardization and reglementation of the geographical names are :

- The Law concerning the functioning of the spoken languages on the territory of the Republic of Moldova from the 31st of August 1989 / The Legislative Acts of the Republic of Moldova, Chişinău, 1990.

- The Law concerning the administrative–territorial organization of the Republic of Moldova N 191-XIV from the 12 of November 1998 / The Official Monitor of the Republic of Moldova, Chişinău, 1998, N 116-118.
- The Law concerning the modification of the Law of the administrative–territorial organization of the Republic of Moldova N 292-XIV from the 19 of February 1999 / The Official Monitor of the Republic of Moldova, Chişinău, 1999, N 30.
- The orthographic, orthoepic and punctuation norms of the Romanian language, Chişinău, 1991.
- Anatol Eremia. The Inventory of the Localities of the Republic of Moldova, Chişinău, 2001.
- Anatol Eremia, Tatiana Constantinov, Stanislav Vieru. The States of the World. Encyclopedic Dictionary, Chişinău, 2000.

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1. The orthographic, orthoepic and punctuation norms of the Romanian language, Chişinău, 1991.
 2. The Orthographic Dictionary with Elements of Orthoepie and Morphology, Chişinău, 1990.
 3. The News of the Supreme Soviet and the Government of the SSRM, Chişinău, 1990, N3.
 4. Moldavian SSR. Administrative – Territorial Division, Chişinău, 1961.
 5. The Republic of Moldova. The General Map, Bucharest, 1993; The Republic of Moldova, The Administrative – Territorial Map, Chişinău, 2000 and others.
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