26 **August** 2002

Original: English

Eighth United Nations Conference on the

Standardization of Geographical Names

Berlin, 27 August-5 September 2002

Item **16** (a) of the provisional agenda*

WRITING SYSTEMS: ROMANIZATION

Russian experience in employing romanization System <<GOST-83>> for Cyrillic Alphabet

(Submitted by Russia)**

---

*E/CONF.94/1

** Prepared by Federal Service of Geodesy and Cartography of the Russian Federation (Roscartography)

*

Russian Experience in Employing Romanization System «GOST-83» for Cyrillic Alphabet

RESUME

The Romanization system for Cyrillic alphabet GOST-83 was adopted and recommended for international use by the 5th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1987 (Montreal).

More than fifteen years have passed since GOST-83 was officially acknowledged. During this time it was applied first in the USSR and then in Russia to release cartographic products intended for international circulation, gazetteers and references devoted to geographical names. This proves the system has stood test time and is being wider and wider used for international circulation per the recommendations of the UN Conferences.

While being employed, GOST-83 has not been modified. However, rules and field of application of the transliteration system has been detailed. Currently GOST-83 is employed in Russia to transliterate place-names of the Russian Federation and the Russian geographical names in Antarctica and the World Ocean for official papers, cartographic and other products issued in foreign languages with Roman script.

The paper comprises some current conventions to apply GOST-83 system, transliteration key table and some instances clarifying its use.

UN Conferences on Geographical Names Standardization recommended that geographical names standardized at the national level should be used for international circulation. Thus, names in the Roman script are used in full graphic forms including modified Roman characters and diacritics available in various languages. For non-Roman languages, international Romanization systems should be based on appropriate national systems.

The 1st UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names adopted a resolution that recommended that each non-Roman country should develop a single Romanization system. Later, basic principles for such a system were formulated – unambiguous, reversible and generic nature, that is capability of being used in different fields of international communication.

Geographical names standardized at national level and then rendered in the Roman script per the conventions adopted in a country are actually official equivalents of national names and should be used in such Romanized forms in various documents aimed at international circulation.

Unique Romanized forms of geographic names provide for their definite identification. Still, any Romanization system is conventional and unable of ensuring full phonetic identity of names.

The Romanization system for Cyrillic alphabet developed in the USSR was adopted for international circulation at the 5th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1987 (Montreal) and called GOST-83.

More than fifteen yearc have passed since GOST-83 was officially acknowledged. During this time it was applied first in the USSR and then in Russia to release such cartographic products intended for international use as general and administrative maps of the Soviet Union at scale 1: 8 000 000, plans of Moscow, Leningrad and other Russian cities, the Atlas of the World, 3d edition (comprising more than 220 000 place-names). GOST-83 was employed to render geographical names in the Gazetteer of Antarctica, Reference Book of Names for World Countries and Territories, Gazetteer of Hydronyms of Russia and other CIS countries. The system was as well used to render Russian place-names in some world atlases, such as e.g., Atlante Enciclopedico Touring, Milano, 1987; Nuovissimo Atlante Geographico Mondiale, Milano, 1998 and others. This proves the system has stood test time and is being wider and wider used for international circulation per recommendations of the UN Conferences.

The gained experience demonstrated that GOST-83 responded to the above mentioned requirements imposed on the systems of the kind.

While being employed, GOST-83 has not been modified. However, rules and field of application of the transliteration system has been detailed.

Currently GOST-83 is employed in Russia to transliterate place-names of the Russian Federation and the Russian geographical names in Antarctica and the World Ocean for official papers, cartographic and other products issued in foreign languages with Roman script. Earlier the standard was used for rendering the Russian forms of geographical names of all the republics in the USSR except for those using Roman script. Meanwhile it is allowed to use GOST-83 to transliterate the Russian forms of geographical names of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, and Ukrania till these states develop their own Romanization systems which will be approved by the UN Conference.

The following Roman characters are used in GOST-83 system: a, **b,** c, d, e, f, **g, h, i, j,** k, **l,** m, **n, o,** p, r, **s, t,** u, **v, y,** z, together with some characters with diacritics: **č,** *e ,* **e, š, ž** and the following marks: **', " .**

Transliteration with GOST-83 is conventional and based on modern normalized Russian spelling of the place-names regardless of the national languages of Russia they originally pertain to.

Transliteration Key Table

Cyrillic character	Corresponding Roman character	Samples	
		In Russian	Romanized
A a	A a	Абакан	Abakan
б б	B b	Бабушкин	Babuskin
В в	V V	Вавилово	Vavilovo
і г	G g	Гагарин	Gagarin
Д д	D d	Дудинка	Dudinka
E e	E e	Елисеевка	Eliseevka
Ё ё	**E e**	Ёлкино	Ëlkino
		Псёл	Psël
Ж ж	Ž ž	Жижица	Žižica
З з	Z z	Звёздный	Zvezdnyj
И и	I i	Идрица	Idrica
Й й	J j	Йошкар-Ола	JoSkar-Ola
К к	K k	Кокуй	Kokuj
Л л	L l	Ляскеля	Ljaskelja
М м	M m	Мама	Mama
Н н	N n	Ногинск	Noginsk
О о	O o	Омолон	Omolon
П п	P p	Попова	Popova
Р р	R r	Ребриха	Rebriha
с с	S s	Сасово	Sasovo
Т т	T t	Татта	Tatta
У у	u u	Ужур	Užur
Ф ф	F f	Фофаново	Fofanovo
Х х	H h	Хохлома	Hohloma
Ц ц	c c	Цаца	Caca
Ч ч	Č č	Чучково	Čučkovo
Ш ш	Š š	Шешма	Šešma
Щ щ	Šč šč	Щигры	Ščigry
Ъ ъ	"	Подъячево	Pod"jacevo
Ы ы	Y y	Ыгыатта	Ygyatta
ь ь	'	Параньга	Poran'ga
Э з	**E e**	Эльтон	Èl'ton
Ю ю	Ju ju	Юрюзань	Jurjuzan'
Я я	Ja ja	Ягылъях	Jagyl"jah

o that in the respective normalized Russian names. For example:

Карское море	-	Karskoe more
Красная Горка	-	Krasnaja Gorka
РостоВ-на-Дону	-	Rostov-na-Donu

Generic terms in short or full forms precede or follow the Romanized place-names just the same way they do it in corresponding Russian names. Examples:

Белое море	-	Beloe more
море Лаптевых	-	more Laptevyh
Баргузинский хребет	-	Barguzinskij hrebet
хр. Менделеева	-	hr. Mendeleeva
м. Челюскин	-	m. Čeljuskin
о-ва Долгие	-	o-va Dolgie
бол. Чистый МОХ	-	bol. Čistyj Moh

Complex and compound names written in Russian in one word or with a hyphen or separately retain their spelling patterns when being Romanized with GOST-83. Examples:

Новомосковск	-	Novomoskovsk
Верхнеуральск	-	Verhneural'sk
Усть-Ордынск	-	Ust'-Ordynsk
Орехово-Зуево	-	Orehovo-Zuevo
Струги-Красные	-	Strugi-Krasnye
Камень-на-Оби	-	Kamen'-na-Obi
Белая Калитва	-	Belaja Kalitva

Romanized names are alphabetically arranged per the following character order: **a, b, c, č, d, e,** *e* **, ë, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, š, t, u, v, y, z, ž.** The Roman characters accompanied by marks **'** and **"** which correspond to Russian characters **ь** and **ъ** follow the Roman letters devoid of these marks.