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Impressum

UNGE N Information Bulletin

(formerly
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The *Information Bulletin of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names* (formerly UNGE N Newsletter) is issued approximately twice a year by the Secretariat of the Group. The Secretariat is established within the Statistics Division (UNSD), Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Secretariat of the United Nations. It publishes contributions/reports from the Experts of the Group, its Linguistic/Geographical Divisions and its Working Groups. Contributions for the Information Bulletin can only be considered when they are made available

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Preface

Message from the Chairperson

Dear UNGEGN Experts

Since the very successful Eighth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin in 2002, we have been making progress in a number of different ways. Divisions, working groups, individual countries and the UNGEGN Secretariat have played their part in moving forward the work of UNGEGN and in implementing the conference resolutions.

Division and Working Group activities

- At least six of the divisions have met in person during 2003 and have exchanged ideas on standardization programmes and common issues.
- In addition, two working groups have held group meetings: the Working Group on Exonyms convened in Praha (Prague) in September 2003 and the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation convened in Seoul in December. The Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy has also been active – with a training course held in Sudan in January 2003 and further courses being

planned for 2004 in Australia, Mozambique and Algeria.

To follow up resolution 15 of the Eighth Conference, the Working Group on Publicity and Funding has been developing two manuals for publication by the United Nations – one a basic manual for the national standardization of geographical names and the other a technical reference manual on issues and standards for databases, romanization and country names. Three of the working groups have been involved in preparing the technical manual (Romanization Systems, Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers, and Country Names). The texts are being submitted this winter, and we hope to see the completed publications available before too long.

- I am pleased to have had the opportunity to cooperate with several of the divisions and working groups in advancing their projects and programmes, and to have worked with the UNGEGN Secretariat on the essential task of developing and updating the UNGEGN website

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geo/info/>).

22nd UNGEGN, 2004

It is with pleasure that I look forward to meeting you again at the forthcoming 22nd Session of UNGEGN to be held in New York from April 20 to 29, 2004.

I urge everyone to submit papers on aspects of the provisional agenda for the UNGEGN session, to reach the Secretariat by March 1. If you have not received the notification about the session, or have questions about it, please contact Mr. Laaribi at the UNGEGN Secretariat.

... With my good wishes for a healthy, happy and successful year in 2004, and a sincere hope that our combined efforts to improve communication may indeed help to create a better world.

Helen Kerfoot
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From the UNGEGN Bureau

Appreciation of the contributions of Peter E. Raper, Chairman of UNGEGN, 1991-2002

Dr. Peter E. Raper was Chairman of UNGEGN from 1991 to 2002. He provided excellent leadership to the Group, as well as to the study of names in Southern Africa. Recently, a festschrift for Dr. Raper was published by the Names Society of Southern Africa in two issues of *Nomina Africana* (volumes 15 and 16) that included articles by a number of UNGEGN participants from around the world.

In the early 1980s, Peter Raper started his work with UNGEGN. Following the invitation of Dr. Josef Breu, he prepared *Toponymic Guidelines* for South Africa, and thanks to the support of Mr. Max de Henseler, then Secretary of UNGEGN, Dr. Raper was designated as South African expert to UNGEGN.

On joining UNGEGN in 1984, Dr. Raper was a member of the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD) and of the United Kingdom Division. He later became Chairman of the DGSD. However, in the mid-1990s Dr. Raper was instrumental in establishing and then chairing the Africa South Division.

Peter Raper represented South Africa at four UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (1987, 1992, 1998 and 2002) and he was elected President of the Seventh Conference in New York in 1998. Dr. Raper was equally interested in participation at the grass roots level, and was an active member of several UNGEGN working groups.

In 1991, Peter Raper was elected as Chairman of UNGEGN and until he stepped down in 2002, he promoted the work of the Group in a number of positive and tangible ways, for example:

- Together with the UNGEGN Secretary, Mr. Valeri Moskalenko, Dr. Raper addressed the 1993 meeting of the UN Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa. The UN Economic Commission for Africa requested his assistance to revitalize and coordinate toponymic activities in Africa - and hence the Africa South Division was born.

- In South Africa, Dr. Raper initiated and co-presented six UN training courses on geographical names. With Dr. Lucie Möller (and UNESCO

funding) he presented a UN Training Workshop on Geographical Names Standardization for the Government of Namibia in 1998.

- When Dr. Breu retired, Peter Raper took over coordination of the preparation of *Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors for International Use*. Many experts responded to his encouragement and Guidelines were issued for some 30 countries. Following much discussion at UNGEGN sessions in the 1990s, Dr. Raper prepared Guidelines for publication in combined volumes, as recommended in conference resolutions. However, the arrival of Internet and Web access, soon made paper copy compendiums of *Toponymic Guidelines* less necessary.

- Dr. Raper worked hard to publicize UNGEGN and the standardization of geographical names, presenting papers in at least ten countries (from Finland to Swaziland, and from Japan to Spain). He published articles in journals, such as *Nomina Africana* and *Onoma*, as well as in *Names Studies: an International Handbook of Onomastics* (New York and

Berlin, De Gruyter) and *You Name It: Perspectives on Onomastic Research* (Helsinki, Studia Fennica).

- Very aware of the UN resolutions to publicize the work of UNGEGN, Dr. Raper prepared and published the first edition of *United Nations Documents on Geographical Names* in 1996. "The red book" contained all the basic documents for UNGEGN participants and became a valued handbook for all experts. The book was purchased in some sixty countries, and experts of various divisions translated the texts (wholly or in part) into other languages.

Dr. Raper has contributed significantly to the study of names in South Africa. As Head of the Onomastic Research Centre of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) from 1970 to 1993, he was instrumental in establishing a digital database on geographical names of South Africa, initiating the Place Names Series of publications, intensive fieldwork on Khoikhoi toponyms, and developing the Survey on

Geographical Names for Southern Africa.

The National Place Names Committee (NPNC) of South Africa (replaced in 1998 by the South African Geographical Names Council) benefitted from Dr. Raper's involvement - as a member, as its Chairman, and as ministerial advisor to formulate the Draft Bill to reconstitute the Committee as the new Council.

Dr. Raper has been extensively involved with both the Place Name Society of Southern Africa, its conferences and its journal *Nomina Africana*, and with the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) and *Onoma*. His expertise has not gone unrecognized, for he has received awards for his work for Afrikaans language and culture, his contributions in the field of onomastics, and for excellence in research.

Peter Raper is held in high esteem by both administrators of geographical names and researchers in onomastic studies. His calm and diplomatic style, appreciated by all UNGEGN experts, and his respect for the

contributions of all participants indeed facilitated and advanced the work of UNGEGN. Dr. Raper chaired the sessions and presided over the Seventh Conference with a fair hand, an open mind, humour, and above all with the interests of participants at heart. His personal efforts to encourage and stimulate the ideas of both individuals and the Group as a whole have added considerably to the implementation of UN resolutions and constitute a significant contribution to UNGEGN's work over two decades.

We wish Dr. Raper every success in his future endeavours and hope that he will stay involved in geographical names activities in the years to come.

UNGEKN Bureau

With grateful thanks to Lucie Möller whose personal communications and "Introduction" in A World of Names (Nomina Africana, Vols 15 and 16) have contributed significantly to the content of this tribute.

News from the Headquarters

From the Secretariat

Dear UNGEGN experts,

Nearly 16 months have passed since the Eighth Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names and the 21st session of UNGEGN in Berlin, and we are now a few months from our next meeting, the 22nd session of UNGEGN.

22nd session of UNGEGN, New York, 20-29 April 2004

The twenty-second session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 20 to 29 April 2004. Copies of the Note Verbale (EC/DESD/GEGN(22)) and the Provisional agenda for the Session (GEGN/22/1) were sent to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations by the end of October 2003 (for more details, see Forthcoming Meetings in this Bulletin).

UNGEKN report

The report of the 21st session of UNGEGN is already edited and published. A copy of this

report, attached to the current issue of the UNGEGN Information Bulletin, is being mailed to each of you. In addition, an electronic copy of the report of the 21st UNGEGN session, as well as a copy of the report of the 8th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names is available on our website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/>).

Indeed, the UNGEGN website was recently updated and we invite you to take a look at it; your comments are greatly appreciated.

I look forward to seeing you in New York and meeting with you during the 22nd session of UNGEGN.

Happy New Year.

Amor Laaribi

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From the Divisions

Romano-Hellenic Division

Report of the Meeting, held in Madrid 5-7 June 2003

According to the decisions of the 2002 meeting of the UNGEGN Romano-Hellenic Division (RHD), which was held in Berlin during the 8th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the 2003 meeting of the RHD took place in Madrid, 5-7 June 2003. It was kindly hosted by the Instituto Geografico Nacional.

Attendance

The meeting was attended by 14 experts from Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain.

Opening of the Session

Mr. Manuel Garcia Perez, Sub-Director of IGN Cartographic Production Division opened the meeting thanking the RHD members for their participation. Mr. Arca (RHD Chairman) thanked him for his hospitality and stressed the good and very much appreciated organization of the meeting put on by the Spanish delegation. He stated, besides, that this meeting is very important as it gives the opportunity to revise and improve all the work carried out in Berlin. Mr. Papaioannou has

been kindly asked to take care of the duties as Rapporteur of the Division.

Adoption of the Agenda

The circulated agenda for the 2003 meeting was adopted.

National Standardization

Mr. Vasileiou presented the report of Cyprus, making an introduction of the status and function of the Cyprus Permanent Committee, which was established in 1977 and officially sanctioned in 1998. Besides presenting the first edition of the Toponymic Guidelines for map editors and other editors which will be presented during the next UNGEGN. Mr. Papaioannou presented the report of Greece informing that in Greece there is not yet a Permanent Committee for the standardization but a joint working group formed by representatives from the public sector. Mr. Cantile presenting the Italian report stated that in Italy, like in Greece, there is not a National Authority for the standardization but a Permanent Committee for the revision of the national official maps. The administrative names competence

rests with the regional authorities. While for the linguistic historical minorities the task is taken by the local authorities (Communi), according to a new law (n. 482 dated 1999) which has been issued in order to protect the historical linguistic minorities. Ms Alcazar presented the report of Spain informing that also in Spain there is not a Permanent Committee for names standardization. Ms Alcazar presented the improvements about treatment of geographical names in multilingual areas, especially the agreement for cooperation between IGN of Spain and the Basque Government.

Besides Ms Azcarate informed that the works about Toponymic Guidelines has been started. Ms Azcarate asked for more information about the composition of the Italian Permanent Committee. Then Mr. Cantile illustrated its composition giving their exact names. Mr. Arca stressed, in conclusion, the importance of the existence of national authorities and asked the participants to work in order to achieve this goal.

Toponymic Data Files

Mr. Vasileiou stated that a study is in progress and will be presented in the future meetings. Mr. Papaioannou presenting the Greek situation for this item stated the existence of a National Gazetteer containing about 90,000 names, besides a publication titled Administrative Division of Greece and a Concise Catalogue of Geographical Names based on 1:1M scale mapping.

Ms Azcarate stated that in Spain the compilation of a Concise Catalogue of Geographical Names has already been started. Ms Alcazar asked the opinion of the members about the need to include names of International Airports in the concise gazetteers. Mr. Vasileiou stated that the 1:1M mapping is a purely informative mapping and suggested the opportunity to have the names of the international airports included. Mr. Makridis said that in the Greek maps at this said scale airports are portrayed only with a symbol but not with their names. Mr. Arca suggested that it could be useful to include the names of the airports in the concise gazetteers.

Exonyms

Mr. Vasileiou informed the participants about the compilation of a list, in draft form, of Country Names and Capitals in the Greek language, which will be published and presented during the next

UNGEGN session. Another list of exonyms is in progress.

Mr. Papaioannou stated that a list of Country Names and their Capitals was created in 2002 in close cooperation with the Cyprus Permanent Committee and that a new edition of this publication will be presented during the next session of UNGEGN. Mr. Orrù stated that the Italian corresponding publication was presented during the last UN Conference in Berlin. The suggestions given by some delegates in order to improve the paper (mostly by the Slovenian delegate) are going to be incorporated and the new version of the document will be presented during the next session of UNGEGN.

Multilingual Glossary

Mr. Orrù informed the participants that the document has been improved thanks to the acquisition of the Turkish version (the paper now is given in seven languages). Mr. Orrù hopes to include in the near future the Portuguese, the Slovenian and the German versions. After completion the paper will be illustrated and then presented in the next UNGEGN session.

Toponymic Web sites

Mr. Arca said that within the Italian Military Geographic Institute web site (www.igmi.org) a section has been created regarding the RHD. It gives information about its activities, its composition, coordinates of delegates etc. He also said that

each RHD member country could mention the work of the division and make a link to the above site.

Next Meeting

After analyzing the various proposals concerning the dates of the next meeting, it was decided that it could be held in conjunction with the next session of UNGEGN (New York, April 2004).

Other Matters

Mr. Makridis asked if a special recommendation of RHD would help the dissemination of the UNGEGN Brochure to several national organizations (like universities, public administrative departments, etc.). Mr. Vasileiou suggested that each country should find the proper ways to disseminate the Brochure.

The Spanish delegation presented their intention to propose a change as for the Spanish version of the Division name. Instead of Romano – Hellenic Division, Spain thinks that denomination in Spanish language “Romanico–Hellenico Division” better reflects all languages coming from Latin. After the opinions expressed by the other members, Mr. Arca suggested that Spain could present a proposal during the next UNGEGN session, though he does not support it since the denomination “Romano – Hellenic Division” is a consolidated conventional name

given since long within UNGEGN.

Spain stressed also the opportunity of amending the RHD questionnaire according to the suggestions of Mr. Dragomirescu (Romania) and Mme Lejeune (France) given during the Berlin meeting.

Mr. Arca invites each country to facilitate the distribution of UNGEGN brochures to: universities; governmental and

semi – governmental institutions; scientific geographic and linguistic associations; map editors and other editors agencies; technical institutions; transportation organizations; technical and legislative magazines; in order to better carry out the UN resolution regarding this matter.

Conclusion of the meeting

Mr. Arca, concluding the meeting, stressed the great work

done by all the participants and the progress achieved within the Division. He expressed again warm words of appreciation to the Spanish delegation for their hospitality and for the very well organized meeting.

Salvatore Arca

*Chair,
UNGEGN Romano-Hellenic
Division*

From the Working Groups

UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms

2nd Meeting of the Working Group, Prague, September 24-26, 2003

This meeting was hosted by the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and Cadastre in collaboration with the Czech Language Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. In keeping with resolution 5 of the Eighth Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Working Group met in conjunction with the 17th Session of the East, Central and South-East Europe Division of UNGEGN. Our thanks are expressed to Mr. Pavel Bohác for his excellent organization of these two events.

The initial proposal to establish an UNGEGN working group on exonyms was made in October 2001 at the Workshop on Exonyms organized by the UNGEGN Dutch- and German-speaking Division in Berchtesgaden, Germany. This was followed up by resolution 4 at the Eighth Conference, recommending the establishment of such a working group. The first meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms was held in Berlin on 6 September 2002.

Currently the Working Group has 20 members from 15 countries and the elected convener is Milan Orožen Adamič (Slovenia, milan@zrc-sazu.si). At the second meeting in Prague, there were 14 members participating from 11 countries and 12 observers from 3 additional countries.

The main theme of the meeting: Many national authorities and experts are dealing with different kinds of geographical names; collecting and maintaining geographical names data. With regard to avoiding more than one name for one feature, exonyms still cause problems in both national and international communication. The meeting aimed to focus on:

- Criteria for the terminological division of exonyms;
- Criteria for the use of exonyms;
- Differences in the usage of exonyms depending on the level of communication;
- Methodological criteria used in the preparation of the national lists of exonyms.

Many interesting papers were presented and the following objectives were underlined:

- Clarify definitions of relevant terminology

Action: Recommend possible revised definitions to the WG on Terminology, to eliminate overlap and ambiguity

- Provide guidance on production of lists of exonyms (as noted in UN Resolutions), and underline the importance of the use of standardized endonyms

Action: Create a template for national lists of exonyms, taking into account the format of existing national lists

- Develop advice on use of exonyms

Actions:

- Identify categories of exonyms, and the scope of their application (Resolution II-28)
- Support the creation of a geographical names database (as suggested by the UN Statistics Division) through the provision of exonyms, as an adjunct to the endonym

- Test the efficacy of existing UN Resolutions on exonyms
Action: Examine Resolutions and consider drafting a new Resolution

In addition, the following points were discussed:

- The need for a work plan for the Working Group

- The usefulness of a Working Group website and on-line discussion forum.

Members of the East, Central and South-East Europe Division included information on exonyms in their country reports.

Milan Orožen Adamic

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Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

Working Group Meeting in Seoul, December 2-4, 2003

As planned in the Berlin meeting in 2002, the second meeting of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation was held in Seoul, December 2-4. Six experts from Algeria, Canada, Mongolia, Norway, Republic of Korea, and UNGEKN Secretariat worked together on seven agenda items:

1. General aims and objectives of the Working Group,
2. Report and analysis of the Berlin evaluation sheets,
3. Discussion on better and more effective operation of UNGEKN and Conferences,
4. Supporting and encouraging developing countries for names standardization,
5. Implementation of UN resolutions and the Aims and Functions of UNGEKN,

6. Other aspects of Working Group tasks,
7. Adoption of the report of the meeting.

A detailed report of the meeting will be submitted to the 22nd Session of UNGEKN in April 2004.

In accordance with resolution VIII/5, every effort was made to have a joint meeting of the East Asia (other China) Division and the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation. Unfortunately, countries of the Division were unable to participate, but a representative from Mongolia was invited and gave a presentation on the status of geographical names standardization in her country.

Participants:

Mr. Ki-Suk Lee (Republic of Korea), Convenor
Mr. Brahim Atoui (Algeria), Vice-Chair UNGEKN
Ms. Helen Kerfoot (Canada), Chair UNGEKN
Mr. Botolv Helleland (Norway) Rapporteur
Mr. Amor Laaribi (UNGEKN Secretariat)
Ms. Uranbileg Sandag (Mongolia)

Ki-Suk Lee

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From the Countries

Canada

Web sites relating to geographical names

Canada's Geographical Names (address change) – English <http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/index_e.php> and French <http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/index_f.php>

Canadian Geographical Names Service (CGNS)/ Service canadien de toponymie-

<<http://www.cgns.nrcan.gc.ca/>>

Alberta web site - <<http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/preservation/heritage/AandH/geographical/index.asp>>

Nova Scotia web site - <<http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/placenames/>>

Lessons from the Land (**Northwest Territories**) web site-

<<http://www.lessonfromtheland.ca>>

Bougainville (Québec/France)- <http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/recherche_bd.htm>

Publicity and education

Alberta celebrates its 100th anniversary as a province in 2005. Work is underway on a book of 2005 place names of Alberta to commemorate this event.

Manitoba has published two place names books – *Geographical Names of Manitoba* and *A Place of Honour - Manitoba's War Dead*

commemorated in its Geography.

These publications are available in French as *Noms géographiques du Manitoba* and *Lieux de mémoire – Des lieux du Manitoba perpétuant le souvenir des soldats morts à la guerre.*

Nova Scotia completed its Coastal Mapping Project. Coastal regions of the province were mapped to the twelve nautical mile limit at a scale of 1:50,000. The maps resulting from this project are a combination of the National Topographic System (NTS) 1:50,000 map and a nautical chart with soundings. Many names on these new maps do not normally appear on NTS maps as they identify offshore reefs and shoals.

In 2003, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, in the **Northwest Territories**, launched a new web site, "Lessons from the Land." (See above for web site address.) Since 1990 the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and the Dogrib Community Services Board have collaborated on many archaeological and museum projects, including heritage resource inventories, recording and documenting Dogrib toponyms, the repatriation of ethnographic

objects, and the revival and recording of technology and associated traditional knowledge. The web resource presents material from all of these projects in an educational format. The Idaa Trail module of the Lessons from the Land web resource represents the most recent collaboration, and the culmination of 13 years of working together on these projects. Two other modules are being worked on with scheduled release dates of 2004 and 2005.

Exonymes de langue française

De concert avec des toponymistes de France, la Commission de toponymie du Québec a ouvert au public, sur le Web, une base de noms de lieux qu'elle héberge sur l'un de ses serveurs. Appelée *Bougainville* <http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/recherche_bd.htm> cette base de données, en processus d'enrichissement continu, contient des exonymes de langue française, c'est-à-dire les toponymes traditionnels en français pour des lieux étrangers (par exemple *Moscou* pour *Moskva* et *Munich* pour *München*).

Commemorative naming

Saskatchewan hopes to have its Geo-Memorial Project

completed by Remembrance Day, 11 November 2003. Some 3,800 geographical names in northern Saskatchewan will have been named after Saskatchewan military personnel who gave their lives during World War II.

Liaison with the United States

Ms. Barbara MacIntosh presented a paper on the Canadian Geographical Names

Service at the Council of Geographic Names Authorities conference in Pacific Grove, California, during the week of 30 September – 4 October 2003.

The annual meeting of the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) was held in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, in October 2003. Mr. Roger Payne, USBGN, gave a

presentation on The National Map and differences and similarities of the Canadian and American names boards to the GNBC plenary session.

Kathleen O'Brien,
GNBC Coordinator
Geographical Names Board of Canada

Israel

The Need for Pronunciation Guides for "Foreign" Geographical Names – Steps Towards a Solution

Theory is one thing – practice is another. The need for clarification regarding the pronunciation of "foreign" geographical names has been mentioned in rather general terms at sessions of UNGEGN and at U.N. Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names in the past. Somewhat vague in its wording was resolution 7 of the third conference (Athens, 1977) which stated "that the Group of Experts consider the nature and design of research and experimentation that may help to establish the range of pronunciation". This was not followed up by practical action.

Every geographical name has, or should have, two forms, (a) the spoken form and (b) the written one. These are expressed in two different modes or media, the first in oral communication, the second graphically in one or more writing systems. The standardization of geographical names (which is the task of UNGEGN and the conferences) has to be, and is being, conducted at two geographical levels. The first is the national level; here a national authority must standardize the written form of endonyms in the script of its country, readable and pronounceable by its citizens. The second is the international level, at which the United Nations request countries with

non-Roman writing systems to provide agreed romanization systems, i.e. transliteration rules of their characters into Roman script. The extensive output of the UNGEGN working group on romanization is of importance, among others, to editors of maps, atlases and other publications involving geographical names in Roman script, but also to those editors of maps in non-Roman scripts who use romanized maps and atlases as the basis of their work instead of working directly from the numerous "foreign" scripts, as indeed do most atlas editors.

Why theory against practice? Romanization, and transliteration in general, does

not solve a basic problem: how a speaker of language x should pronounce names he reads in a form romanized from script y . Transliteration keys enable the transfer of names from one script to another, but many letters represent different phonemes (sounds) in different languages, and what is more – diacritical marks or signs used widely in transliteration are often not understood or not correctly interpreted phonetically by the reader. Consider the following four examples.

(1) The English editor of an officially romanized map of Russia must instruct readers of the map, for example, that the diacritically-marked letter \check{s} should be pronounced not as s but as English sh . Even a concise pronunciation table would make this clear.

(2) The French editor of a tourist map of Spain wishes to inform users of his map who have to ask for road directions how to pronounce names having the digraph ll or the diacritic \tilde{n} in them. It would be of advantage if he added a Spanish-to-French pronunciation guide in the map legend.

(3) The editor of toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors in country z wishes to convey to readers how geographical names in his country are pronounced and not only read, and to do this for the working languages of the United Nations. Again, a pronunciation guide for the three languages would supply a solution.

(4) The Roman letter q (without a following u) used in the romanization of various languages is pronounced as a guttural k in Arabic and Hebrew, approximately as ch in Chinese and as a click-sound in some African languages. Proper pronunciation guides for these languages are thus needed.

It is, therefore, desirable that pronunciation guides be nationally prepared, and accepted by UNGEGN and confirmed for international use by the U.N. Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

A first paper with detailed proposals and specifications for a solution of this problematic topic was presented by Israel at the Eighth Conference held in Berlin in August-September 2002, in conference paper E/CONF.94/CRP89 [1]. This paper also submitted a proposed text for a resolution to set up a working group on pronunciation within UNGEGN, to be adopted by the conference thereupon recommended acting upon the proposal [2] and adopted the proposed text verbatim as resolution VIII/11 [3], thus establishing the working group.

But here we return to the question of theory as opposed to practice and practicability. The problem to be solved is not a simple one, but rather complicated and many-faceted, and can only be solved partially,

for two reasons. Reason one is the fact that sounds of one language can be represented by the script of another only approximately. So we can only strive for the ideal reproduction of sounds, but hardly ever achieve it. Let this not deter us; not in vain has it been said that "the best is the enemy of the good". Reason two leads us further into theoretical linguistic space:

In the following schematization, let us denote the number of different scripts by the letter m , and the number of languages by n . Romanization is a vectorial operation, involving m romanization tables such as those included in the report by the UNGEGN working group on romanization systems [4]. On the other hand, pronunciation guides are a matrix operation with, basically and theoretically, $m \times n$ tables to satisfy the needs of the readers of all languages. You can draw such a requirement table by listing n language names in a horizontal line of headings, and the list of m scripts as the vertical axis. Into each cell thus generated one should fit one pronunciation table, for example "Japanese to Greek". Strictly speaking, only $t = (m \times n) - n$ or $t = (m - 1) \times n$ tables are required, because the guides for the pronunciation of any particular script in its own language would be redundant. In practice, t may vary in the case of several languages using the same script.

Producing the pronunciation tables would be a very big task, perhaps overtaxing and overtiming the work of a single working group. But this task can be considered at three levels of extent and complexity, and broken down into three phases which can be approached successively, depending on the amount of work a committee or working group, and especially its convenor, is ready to invest. The first phase would be the preparation of pronunciation tables only for speakers of English. This would result in $t_1 = m \times 1 = m$ tables, just as in romanization, and would be a manageable first task for a working group. The second phase would consist of preparing tables for the three working languages of the United Nations, English, French and Spanish, i.e. $t_2 = m \times 3 = 3m$ tables. The last and highest phase would

provide tables for n languages and m scripts, and would result in $t_3 = (n - 1) \times m$ tables.

For the working group on pronunciation to be able to do its work, UNGEGN and the Conferences must call upon all countries to prepare national pronunciation guides, starting with phase I (for English) and to submit these to the working group and through it to UNGEGN, perhaps via the New York secretariat.

Israel has already supplied to UNGEGN a detailed pronunciation table of its official script, Hebrew, for phase I, and hopes that other countries will follow suit.

Notes

[1] Proposal for the establishment of a working group on the pronunciation of

geographical names (E/CONF.94/CRP.89).

[2] See "Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, Berlin, 27 August–5 September 2002", report of Committee III, paragraph 202, p. 29.

[3] Op. cit., p. 40, Resolution VIII/11, Working Group on the Pronunciation of Geographical Names.

[4] Report on the current status of the United Nations romanization systems for geographical names. Document E/CONF.94/CRP.81, compiled by the UNGEGN Working Group on Romanization Systems, May 2002.

Naftali Kadmon
Convenor, UNGEGN Working Group on Terminology

Sudan

Beja Writing Systems: Arabic Script and Standardization

The Beja language is widespread in the northeastern Sudan. It is genetically related to Ancient Egyptian and Somali. Options for writing Beja geographical names in an Arabic-based script are now being examined. Attention is being given to ideological and

practical considerations. Native speakers of Beja have a major role in choosing the writing system and their choices inevitably reflect ideological positions. For example, they can elect to spell loan-words from Arabic according to the rules of Arabic orthography and thus

provide a bridge to the mastery of correct Arabic. Or they can adopt a policy of spelling Arabic loan-words as they are pronounced in Beja speech. They can even go as far as trying to 'purify' Beja of its non-Beja elements. The choice of symbols to represent the sounds of Beja

is constrained by regional and international considerations beyond the Beja speech community.

A variety of Arabic-based writing systems such as Arabic and Farsi are being examined. Urdu orthography may have a particular relevance to Beja due to the existence of retroflex consonants in both Beja and Urdu. However, it is necessary to consider the expense of adopting

any unusual characters. Attention is being given to the influence of Sudanese Colloquial Arabic and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic on potential choices. Finally, attention is given to international pressures for a standardized approach to writing systems, e.g. by UNGEEN and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) with headquarters in Rabat. The

involvement of UNGEEN in encouraging the standardization of geographical names in a Romanized form is observed to have an impact on issues of standardization in Arabic-based writing systems.

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Forthcoming Meetings and Training

The 22nd Session of UNGEGN, New York, 20-29 April 2003

The Twenty-second session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names will be held in New York, from 20-29 April 2004, in accordance with the Economic and Social Council Decision 2000/292 of 24 July 2003.

The Letter of Invitation "Note Verbale" for this Conference (EC/DESD/GEGN(22)) was sent to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations on 29 October 2003. The Provisional Agenda for the Conference (document GEGN/22/1), attached with the Note Verbale, includes the following items:

1. Opening of the session
2. Adoption of agenda
3. Report of the Chairperson
4. Report of the Secretary
5. Reports of the divisions
6. Reports of the liaison officers, regional meetings and international organizations
7. Summary reports of the working groups.
8. Meeting of the working group on training courses in toponymy.
9. Meeting of the working group on toponymic data files and gazetteers.
10. Meeting of the working group on terminology.
11. Meeting of the working group on romanization systems.
12. Meeting of the working group on country names.
13. Meeting of the working group on publicity and funding.
14. Meeting of the working group on evaluation and implementation.
15. Meeting of the working group on exonyms.
16. Meeting of the working group on pronunciation.
17. Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors.
18. Standardization in multilingual areas.
19. Progress made on archiving documents pertaining to the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and to the sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
20. Implementation of resolutions and the aims and functions of the Group of Experts.
21. Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.
22. Twenty-third session of the Group of Experts
23. Other matters.
24. Adoption of the report.

Documents should be submitted under individual agenda items and should reach the UNGEGN Secretariat by March 1. Digital files are preferred and can be made available on the UNGEGN website.

For further information, you can contact Mr. Amor Laaribi at the following address:

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Training Course in Toponymy to be held in Australia

A UN-supported Training Course in Toponymy will be held from 12 to 24 October 2004 at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, organised jointly by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy at Macquarie University, Sydney and the New South Wales Geographical Names Board.

Course participants will come both from nations throughout the Asia South-East & Pacific South-West Division of UNGEGN and from the nomenclature authorities established in the various states and territories of Australia. One of the most valuable aspects will be the opportunity to share knowledge with overseas colleagues having different backgrounds and experiences.

Both technical and cultural aspects of toponymy will be covered, and there will be lectures, group exercises, and the opportunity for hands-on

experience of data processing, plus a practical fieldwork exercise in the surrounding region. Presenters will include UNGEGN Chair Helen Kerfoot and Ferjan Ormeling, Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy, as well as staff of the Asia-Pacific Institute of Toponymy, the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales, and other Australasian nomenclature authorities.

A centrepiece of the course will be a regular meeting of the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales, which participants will attend as observers after a full briefing on the work of the Board and the issues to be discussed. A meeting of the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia, the umbrella organisation for the naming authorities of Australia and New Zealand, will also be held in conjunction with the course

and joint sessions will be attended both by participants in the course and by delegates to the CGNA meeting.

It is planned that the course will have around 20 international and domestic participants. International applications have been received from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Vietnam. We are currently looking at ways of supporting as many of these as possible, and in March will notify all applicants of whether we are able to offer them a place on the course.

For further information please contact:

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Training Course in Toponymy

Maputo - Mozambique, 13-24 September 2004

A Training Course in Toponymy will take place from 13 to 24 September 2004 at the National Directorate of Geography and Cadastre in Maputo – Mozambique. The Course, concerned with the standardization and administration of Geographical Names, will be offered in English.

Aims of the Course

The aims of the course are the following:

- To provide Developing Countries with the information on the establishment or the strengthening of “names authorities” that can deal with national geographical names in general, with names collection, names surveys, national names standardization, the preparation of gazetteer and/or a digital toponymic data base. Such a data base could become part of a

national Geographic Information System (GIS).

- To enable interested participants to attend the Names Society of the Southern Africa Congress to be held in Maputo, immediately following the course;

Those interested in the course should observe the following conditions:

- Be trained in cartography, geography, or linguistics;
- Work in their country in any organization, institution or agency that deals or will deal in one way or another with national and international standardization of geographical names (collection of geographical names, correct spelling of names, origin of names, preparation of list of names or gazetteers, the use of foreign names in the

national languages, or the use of romanized place names in countries using non – Roman writing systems).

- Be in a position, on returning to his/her home country, to transfer to others the lessons learned at the training course.

For further information, please contact:

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