

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING DIVISION – 2007 TO 2021

The Portuguese-speaking Division was created in August 2007, during the 24th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. The (potential) Member Countries of the Division are Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste, the nine Portuguese-speaking countries in the world.

The following countries, represented by their delegates listed below attended the first meeting of the Division, when it was created:

- Moçambique (representado por Zinia Gabriela Lopes Menete Mabote);
- Brasil (representado por Moema José de Carvalho Augusto);
- Cabo Verde (representado por José António Andrade);
- Angola (representado por João de Deus Andrade Delgado e Pedro Gomes).

Mozambique was appointed Chair and Brazil Vice-Chair, with Angola as Secretary, for a 5 year term.

The initial goals of the Portuguese-speaking Division were established in this meeting, as follow:

- Create a website for the Division (to be accomplished by Brazil, until June 2008);
- Exchange information concerning the legislation on geographical names, toponymy, administrative division and other related subjects of each country;
- Compile and exchange information on the structures and ongoing work in each country related to geographic names and toponymy among Member Countries of the Portuguese-speaking Division and with the UNGEGN, by the Division Chair;
- Prepare a list of each country's exonyms (to be accomplished till March 2008);
- Prepare a glossary of terms related to geographical names in Portuguese (to be accomplished by Brazil until March 2008);
- Translate into Portuguese the UNGEGN glossary of toponymic terminology (to be accomplished by Brazil until March 2008);
- Exchange information on the criteria for the classification of urban and rural zones (population centers);
- Compile the list of generic terms and abbreviations that appear in topographic maps of each country and disseminate it among Member States, for study and subsequent standardization;
- Exchange the electronic addresses of institutions and technicians involved in the matter of geographic names and toponymy;
- Periodical cooperation and interchange of experiences;
- Establish more goals to be achieved by the Division, other than these already listed.

Also in this meeting, it was established that each Member State was individually in charge of:

- Visiting the UNGEGN website to take note of the updated version of the volume “Statutes, Laws, Procedures and Resolutions of Geographical Names”;
- Preparing a list of other goals to be achieved by the Division and send it to the Chair for compilation and dissemination (until October 2007);
- Preparing the country's geographic names database;
- Sending the Chair the following information:
 - Information concerning the legislation on geographical names, toponymy, administrative division and other related subjects;

- Description of the structures and ongoing work in each country related to geographic names and toponymy;
- The criteria for the classification of urban and rural zones (population centers);
- The criteria for the classification of urban and rural zones (population centers);
- The list of their exonyms;
- The list of the generic terms and abbreviations that appear in the country's topographic maps;
- The list of the electronic addresses of institutions and technicians involved in the matter of geographic names and toponymy.

The second meeting of the Portuguese-speaking Division took place during the *Primeiro Seminário em Nomes Geográficos da Comunidade de Países da Língua Portuguesa - CPLP* (First Seminar on Geographical Names of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries - CPLP). On this occasion, the chairmanship of the Portuguese-speaking Division had been transferred to Mr. Elias Mucombo, from Mozambique, in substitution for Ms. Zínia Mabote Menete.

Seven of the Member States attended the meeting and the ask that had been agreed on in the first meeting were presented to the countries which did not attend this previous meeting.

Brazil presented the Portuguese-speaking Division website and the Member States were asked to submit the information necessary to complete it, which was intended to be the repository of and the vehicle for the dissemination of information from each country on geographic names, translations of documents and reference publications of UNGEGN, as well for the contact information of the Member States, among other functions.

Besides the already established goals, the following were set in this second meeting:

- Send information on toponymic changes to UNGEGN and disseminate this information;
- The publication and subsequent update of guidelines for the use of geographical names in cartographic products, including specific information such as the situation of the geographical names in the countries' official languages, rules of pronunciation and national names authorities.

After this second meeting, the contacts among the countries practically ceased. From 2010 to 2011, Brazil made several failed attempts to contact the other Member States, either by phone or email, in order to proceed with the work within the Portuguese-speaking Division. Only two attempts were successful during this period: in 2010, Cabo Verde and Portugal were contacted and Portugal sent some of the information agreed on the first divisional meeting to populate the Division's website. Cabo Verde stated having sent the information requested, however it never reached the IBGE.

From 2011 to 2016 there were no contact among Member States.

In 2015, during the International Cartographic Conference (ICC 2015), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil proposed to the then Coordinator of the Working Group on Toponymy Training Courses, Dr. Ferjan Ormeling, to carry out an international toponymy course, aiming at becoming a training hub in geographical names for the countries of the Latin America and the Portuguese-speaking Division, in an attempt to reactivate the latter.

On his occasion, 4 Member States responded to the IBGE's invitation to participate in the training course.

Thus, *The UNGEGN and IBGE International Course on Toponymy* was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 15 to 19 May, 2017. Co-organized by the IBGE and UNGEGN, the course was taught by three UNGEGN instructors and 6 IBGE instructors and was attended by 32 participants, 5 of which were representatives of government institutions from DPLP Member Countries, other than Brazil, namely: Mozambique, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe and Portugal. On that occasion, a meeting was organized with participants from the Member States of the Portuguese-speaking Division, who would take to their countries the proposal to reactivate the Division.

This was a fruitful attempt, which brought Brazil and Mozambique closer together. In 2018, three toponymists from the Institute of Geographical Names of Mozambique - INGEMO - IP participated in the IBGE's Geographical Names Standardization Course and in a two-day workshop at that institution.

In relation to other countries, however, communication ceased again.

In 2021, after the 2nd Session of the UNGEGN, the IBGE requested assistance from the UNGEGN Secretariat in obtaining contacts from the Portuguese-speaking Division potential Member Countries, in order to try to reactivate the Division one more time. So far, we have been able to receive a response from Sao Tome and Principe, which will be contacted shortly.

In view of this, the IBGE invited the INGEMO - IP for a videoconference, in order to discuss the future of the Portuguese-speaking Division, which was inactive and without leaders, since the representative of Mozambique had left the INGEMO - IP and the representative of Brazil had retired. Furthermore, only two of the objectives established at the first meeting were achieved, namely, the translation into Portuguese of the Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographic Names and the creation of the website. However, due to the low interest of the Member States, the website of the Portuguese-speaking Division is outdated and with very little content.

The above mentioned videoconference was held on July 27, 2021, attended by the following representatives of the institutions:

For the INGEMO - IP - José Mahumane (Director), Juvenália Mendiata (Assistant Director), Ambrósio Mafumo (Toponymist/ Historian) and Aníbal Tiane (Toponymist /Historian)

For the IBGE - Míriam Barbuda (Assitant Director of Directorate of Geosciences), Leila Oliveira (General Manager of Cartography), Beatriz Pinto (Manager of the Geographical Names Department) and Ana Cristina Resende (Assistant Manager of the Geographical Names Department).

After the IBGE exposed the current situation of the DPLP, INGEMO - IP, under a new and recent administration, stated they had gone through great difficulties and had been very little active for a period of time and that they were now, with the new Directors, a resuming their activities, albeit with a staff deficit . However, despite the problems reported, the institution was receptive to the proposal to reactivate the Portuguese-speaking Division and decided to give their decision, in a new meeting, on continuing as Chair, assisted by the IBGE, which would remain as Vice-Chair.

On August 19, 2021, a second videoconference was held, with the same participants as the previous one, with the addition of IBGE's Coordinator of Cartography and Geodesy, Marcelo Maranhão.

The INGEMO - IP accepted the proposal to remain as Chair, which is very auspicious, since the institution is the national authority on geographical names of Mozambique. It should be noted

that Brazil does not have a national authority yet and that the IBGE is not an institution dedicated only to working with geographical names.

Thus, the following initial tasks for the reactivation of the Portuguese-speaking Division were established:

1) Initiate contacts with other Portuguese-speaking countries, with INGEMO - IP being responsible for contacting the African countries, namely: Angola, Sao Tome and Príncipe, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Bissau and IBGE with the task of contacting Timor-Leste and Portugal.

- Deadline: November 2021.
- Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE.

2) Share the names of the representatives of the two countries and send them to the UNGEGN Secretariat, together with a brief report on the new status of the Portuguese-speaking Division.

- Deadline: September 3rd.
- Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE;

3) Jointly prepare the report on the current status of the DPLP for submission to the UNGEGN Secretariat.

- Deadline: September 15th.
- Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE.

4) Submit the report on the current status of the Division to the UNGEGN Secretariat, summarizing the decisions taken at the two meetings.

- Deadline: September 15th.
- Responsible: INGEMO - IP.

5) Hold Divisional meetings on a quarterly basis.

- Next: November 2021.
- Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE.

6) Indicate focal points of institutions.

- Deadline: August 19th (Fulfilled). Nominees: Aníbal Tiane and Ambrósio Mafumo for INGEMO - IP and Ana Cristina Resende for IBGE.
- Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE.

7) Reactivate the DPLP website (web page).

- Deadline: February 2022.
- Responsible: IBGE.

8) Send IBGE the necessary information to update the DPLP website (web page).

- Deadline: As soon as there is material.
- Responsible: INGEMO - IP.

In fulfillment of the tasks above listed, this report was prepared, contacts with the Portuguese-speaking countries are ongoing and the following state officials were appointed as representatives of the two countries in the Portuguese-speaking Division:

- José Jorge Mahumane, Director General of INGEMO - IP, for Mozambique;
- Ana Cristina Resende, Assistant Manager of the Geographical Names Department/IBGE, for Brazil.

Maputo, September 2021