

11 February 2019

Original: English

**United Nations Group of Experts On
Geographical Names**

2019 session

New York, 29 April – 3 May 2019

Agenda item 5(a) of the provisional agenda *

**Reports: Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the
standardization of geographical names**

Report of Cyprus

Submitted by Cyprus**

* GEGN.2/2019/1

** Prepared by Andreas Hadjiraftis, President of Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names of Cyprus.



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Ref.: E.T. 5/97



*1st Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
United Nations Headquarters, New York, April 29 to May 3, 2019.*

National Report of the Republic of Cyprus

Cyprus Permanent Committee
for the Standardization of Geographical Names (CPCSGN)
Prepared by: Andreas Hadjiraftis
*President of Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names of Cyprus
Ag. Chief Lands Officer, Cartography/Geodesy/Hydrography/Photogrammetry,
Department of Lands and Surveys, Ministry of Interior,
Lefkosia, Cyprus
Tel: +35722804813 | Fax: +35722804881 | email: ahadjiraftis@dls.moi.gov.cy
Website: www.geonoma.gov.cy*

1. Summary

This brief National Report refers to the intersessional period, in relation to the activities of the Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names of the Republic of Cyprus (CPCSGN).

The first section includes background information regarding the establishment and operation of the CPCSGN, the legislation and the structure under which it operates, and the main principles followed.

The second section of the report includes a brief description of the main goals and national programmes.

The third section includes the main achievements, which are briefly described and explained.

The last section of the report includes the conclusions.

2. Background Information

Cyprus is privileged to have most of its geographical names included in ancient texts from Homer to Herodotus, the tragic poets and Strabon, up to ancient cartographers, like Claudius Ptolemaeus, and from medieval cartographers, like Abraham Ortelius, up to lord Horatio H. Kitchener, who mapped Cyprus in the 19th Century at the beginning of the British rule of the island. The name of the island “Kypros” was mentioned by Homer 3000 years ago.

The Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names (CPCSGN) was officially established by the decision of the Council of Ministers no.15.769 of 21.4.1979 and constitutes the only competent National Authority for the Standardization of Geographical Names in Cyprus. According to law N.66(I)/98 and the regulations ΚΑΠ 443/2001, the Committee acts under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

According to Law N.66(I)/98 and regulations ΚΔΠ 443/2001, the Minister of Education and Culture, as the Competent Authority, appoints the President and the members of the Committee every five years. The Committee consists of a President and nine members.

The Committee is subdivided into five subcommittees, which deal with specific issues as follows:

1. Publications
2. Standardization and transliteration
3. Awareness
4. Development and update of website
5. Updating of Gazetteers

In the exercise of its powers, the Committee selects from the existing types of geographical names, a single type for official and international use, after examining them, based on linguistic, grammatical, aesthetic, social and historical criteria.

The Committee collects data from the fields of history, linguistics, archaeology, literature, cartography and folklore that help the etymology, spelling and standardization of toponyms and names of the municipalities and the communities of Cyprus.

Law N.71(I)/2013 criminalizes the alteration of geographical names and toponyms and the illegal issue, import, circulation, supply, distribution and trade of maps, books or other documents, in conventional or digital form, which contain geographical names and toponyms of the Republic, imprinted differently than those specified in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Law, or those contained in the official Toponymic Gazetteer.

3. CPCSGN Main Duties

The Committee mainly deals with the following duties:

1. Handles all matters related to the standardization of geographical names of the Republic of Cyprus.
2. Records the geographical names of the Republic of Cyprus, studies all related issues, and submits to the Competent Authority for approval its suggestions on standardization and coding of geographical names.
3. Represents the Republic of Cyprus in international meetings of the United Nations (UN) on issues of its competence, and cooperates with the UN and other international organizations, and the corresponding national committees of other countries, to attain the objectives provided in legislation.
4. Advises the competent local authorities for naming or renaming of streets, and the spelling of geographical names.
5. Monitors the implementation of the standardization of geographical names and the Greek to Roman alphabet transliteration system of the Greek Organization for Standardization (ELOT 743), which was accepted by the Fifth Conference of the United Nations, as a standard of the International Standardization Organization (ISO 843.3) and was adopted by the Council of Ministers.

4. Achievements

4.1 CPCSGN Website

The CPCSGN regularly maintains a website, where all relevant information is available. The address of this website is: <http://www.geonoma.gov.cy>. The website includes information regarding the historic background of CPCSGN, legislation and regulations regarding its operation, the organizational structure, announcements, activities, documents from our participation in conferences and other events, documents regarding the transliteration of geographical names in roman alphabet, several editions, maps, etc. The website also includes a complete and fully searchable national gazetteer. A very helpful tool was developed for the automatic transliteration of geographical names from greek to roman alphabet, based on ELOT 743, which is available on-line at:

<http://www.geonoma.gov.cy/index.php/typopoiisi/metagrafi-ellnikou-alfavitou>

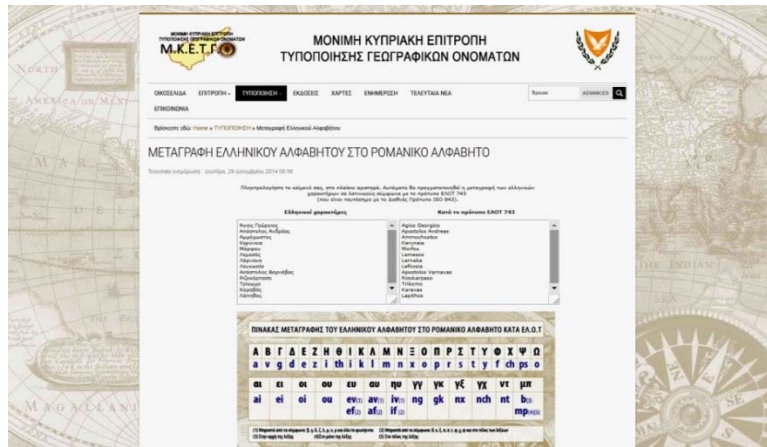


Fig. 1: Tool for automatic transliteration from greek to roman alphabet

4.2 Book – Names of Countries and Capitals

A book including a list of names of countries and capitals was submitted during the 10th UN Conference and the 27th Session of UNGEGN and was also distributed to many government departments, ministries, academic institutions, schools, and interested citizens. This book is regularly distributed to any interested persons in hardcopy form. It is also available on CPCSGN’s website for viewing and downloading:

<http://www.geonoma.gov.cy/myfiles/ekdoseis/chores-protevous/index.html>.

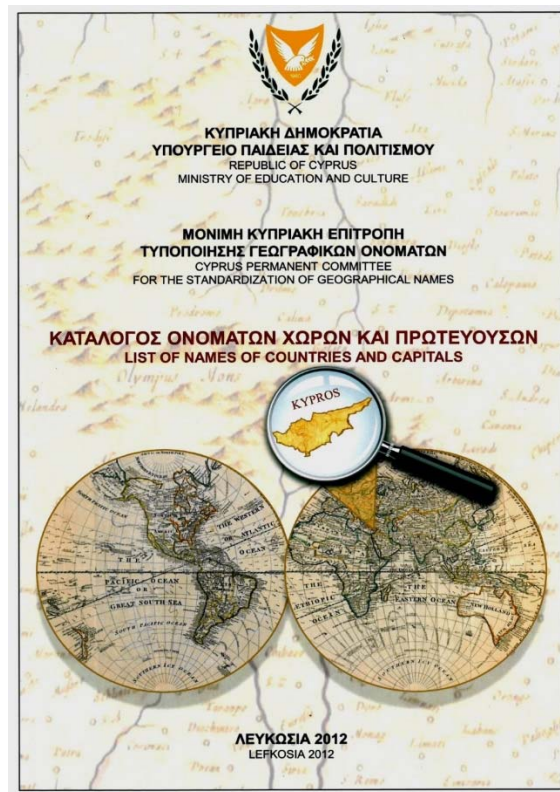


Fig. 2. Book – Names of Countries and Capitals

4.3 National Gazetteers

The existing national gazetteers prepared by the CPCSGN in 1982 and 1987 respectively are:

- (i) The “*Concise Gazetteer of Cyprus*” (about 2000 entries)
- (ii) The “*A Complete Gazetteer of Cyprus*” (about 67000 entries)

All geographical names and toponyms included in these gazetteers were derived from the official large-scale cadastral maps and the land registers of the Department of Lands and Surveys. The Complete Gazetteer of Cyprus is currently available on CPCSGN’s website at:

<http://www.geonoma.gov.cy/myfiles/ekdoseis/cygazetteer/index.html>.

All cadastral maps of Cyprus have been digitized and their information was categorized and stored in digital relational databases and Geographical Information Systems (GIS), along with many other layers of spatial information. Based on these databases, it is possible to easily identify and locate any geographical name in Cyprus.

4.4 Gazetteer of Sea Geographical Names

A new edition was recently prepared by the CPCSGN titled: “Gazetteer of Sea Geographical Names of Cyprus”. The gazetteer was initially presented and submitted to the 11th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names that took place in New York, in August 2017. This Gazetteer is available at:

<http://www.geonoma.gov.cy/myfiles/ekdoseis/thalassia-toponymia/index.html>

This work has been planned and worked out on the basis of the principles, the rules and the recommendations of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and it is the result of the joined efforts of all members of the CPCSGN and the Department of Lands and Surveys.

The sea names were extracted from the Hydrographic Database of the Integrated Land Information System of Cyprus. All names are based on the official cadastral maps, registers, topographic maps, and other official evidence, in close coordination with the central government and the local authorities.

The sea names are also accessible as e-services through Cyprus Geoportal. The collection and processing methodology is fully described in the edition. A total of 47 maps on scale 1:25000 have also been prepared for this purpose. A cross reference to the maps, along with coordinates, and other useful information, are given for each name within the gazetteer.

Hard copies of the book were delivered to government ministries and departments, academic institutions, semi-government organizations, associations, and many other interested organizations and persons. Hard copies are still made available for free to any interested organization or person.

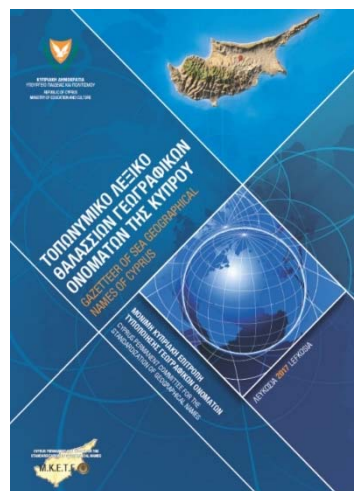


Fig. 3: Gazetteer of Sea Geographical Names of Cyprus

4.5 EuroGeographics Products and Services

All geographical names and toponyms of Cyprus are also included in a distributed European database named “EuroGeonames” through EuroGeographics, and they are available on-line.

Major geographical names are also included in other EuroGeographics’ digital databases such as: EuroGlobal Map, EuroRegional Map, and EuroBoundary Map.

Geographical names of Cyprus will also be included in the new EuroGeographics European Location Services (ELS) Program.

4.6 Odonyms

Odonyms in Cyprus are given and maintained by the Municipal and Community Councils. These odonyms, are under the approval of the respective District Officers, which operate under the Ministry of Interior. All official street names are communicated to the CPCSGN, for checking and correction, in order to achieve uniformity all over the island.

A complete catalogue of odonyms is maintained by the Department of Postal Services at:

<http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/dps/dps.nsf/All/A5F60C0E7BE1DC60C22581D7003EA9B8?OpenDocument>

In addition, the Department of Lands and Surveys maintains street names in separate layers, as a part of the Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) of the National Integrated Land Information System (NILIS), thus making them available for several uses, through geospatial databases and web e-services. A variety of standard and ad-hoc maps are produced through this system. Geographical names are extremely important, and they are always included in mapping products and applications.

4.7 Geographical Names in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) of Cyprus

All geographical names and toponyms are included in the geoportal of Cyprus at: www.geoportal.gov.cy. Geographical names and other geo-spatial information are accessible on-line for searching, viewing, transformation, downloading, printing, and direct accessing via GIS.

The New Internet Services platform is a landmark in the modern history of the Republic of Cyprus and the Department of Lands and Surveys, as following intensive efforts lasting many years, geo-spatial information was given full access to the outside world, with on-line services via the Internet, through a platform of electronic services. The whole concept is based on a 24-hour available, fast and friendly service.

A new IT customer-centric culture is embedded in the platform, focusing on the citizen via the availability of electronic services. The Government’s target is the elimination of time-consuming bureaucratic procedures in the acceptance of applications and the ease of access into core data. The whole effort is just the start; the target is to continuously improve currently available services offered, through the gradual inclusion of new applications in the near future.

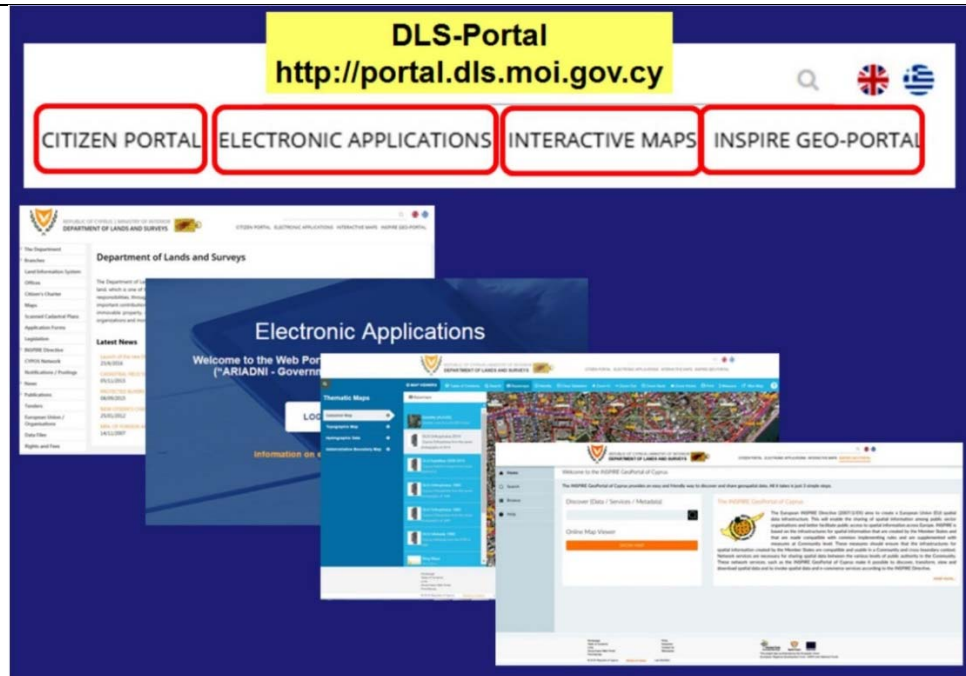


Fig. 4: DLS Portal

The new Internet Services Platform consists of four (4) main pillars:

- **A Dynamic Front Page with Static Information and Services.** The new page includes all relevant static information, access to data, free maps and cadastral plans, fees calculating tools, etc.
- **Ability to Navigate to a Property through an On-line Free Web Applications.** The applications use modern GIS (Geographical Information Systems) technology, extending them through Web-GIS capabilities. Various layers of information are available, such as: geographical names, administrative boundaries, land parcels, buildings, plan grids, aerial photography, satellite images, planning zones, hydrographic features etc. The ability to identify each property is available with many important parcel characteristics, scanned cadastral plans, the values of the general valuation and many others. Two additional thematic on-line services are also available with very important multi-variable attributes; the topographical and the hydrographical. Search, printing, as well as access via web-services is also offered.
- **Electronic Application Submission.** An "e-Applications Dashboard" is available for every citizen, hosting personal profiling, monitoring of all registered applications and providing the ability to launch and submit an application, purchase static maps, export data and upload data. The selection and provision of GIS data to the citizen is dynamic, and specific services are provided to private surveyors and valuers.
- **Adherence and Implementation of the INSPIRE Directive for Cyprus.** The implementation of the INSPIRE Directive (2007/2/EC) for the Republic of Cyprus (ref. to Law 43(I)/2010) through a specialized and dedicated INSPIRE GeoPortal platform, integrated inside the DLS PORTAL, is fully available. The European INSPIRE Directive aims to create a European Union (EU) spatial data infrastructure. This implementation enables the sharing of geo-spatial information (classified into 34 different geospatial themes and several layers/e-services), among public sector organizations, and better facilitates public access to geo-spatial information across Europe. INSPIRE is based on the infrastructures for geo-spatial information that are created by EU Member States, that are made compatible with common implementing rules, and are supplemented with measures at Community level. Geographical names are included in all major e-services. Network services, such as the INSPIRE GeoPortal of

Cyprus make it possible to discover, transform, view and download spatial data and to invoke spatial data and e-commerce services from various Governmental sources, according to the INSPIRE

4.8 Collection and Standardization of Geographical Names

The CPCSGN continues the tasks for the collection, the standardization and the Romanization of the Greek alphabet, according to ELOT 743, of the geographical names of the Republic of Cyprus. All geographical names were gathered by appropriate and authorized bodies during the mapping of Cyprus in 1878 and later periods. During the last two years, more than 1000 geographical names, including among others toponyms, have been examined and processed, offering services to the central government, and local government authorities, for the standardization and transcription from the Greek to the Roman script according to ELOT 743.

4.9 Poster and Book Marker on the Standardization and Transliteration of Geographical Names

CPCSGN recently prepared a poster regarding the standardization and transliteration of geographical names. This poster was distributed to all high schools. The Committee also published a book marker which was distributed to all schools and government departments. This book marker includes brief information regarding the tasks undertaken by the Committee and also includes the transliteration rules followed. The poster is also available for downloading at:

http://www.geonoma.gov.cy/myfiles/archeia/diafotisi/2015_poster_outline.pdf

MONIMH KYΠPIAKH EΠITPOTH TYPOTΠOIHΣHΣ
ΓEOΓPAΦIKON ONOMATON (MKETTO)

ΠIHAKAS METAΓPAΦHΣ TOY EΛΛHNIKOY AΛΦABHTOY CTO POMANIKO AΛΦABHTO KATA EΛ.O.T

Α	Β	Γ	Δ	Ε	Ζ	Η	Θ	Ι	Κ	Λ	Μ	Ν	Ξ	Ο	Π	Ρ	Σ	Τ	Υ	Φ	Χ	Ψ	Ω
a	v	g	d	e	z	i	th	i	k	l	m	n	x	o	p	r	s	t	y	f	ch	ps	o

αι	ει	οι	ου	ευ	αυ	ηυ	γγ	γκ	γξ	γχ	ντ	μπ
ai	ei	oi	ou	ev ⁽¹⁾	av ⁽¹⁾	iv ⁽¹⁾	ng	gk	nx	nch	nt	b ⁽³⁾
				ef ⁽²⁾	af ⁽²⁾	if ⁽²⁾						mp ⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾

(1) Μερικά από τα σύμφωνα β, γ, δ, ζ, ι, κ, λ, μ, ν, ρ και όλα τα φωνήλια
(2) Μερικά από τα σύμφωνα θ, κ, λ, π, ρ, σ, φ και στο τέλος των λέξεων
(3) Στη αρχή της λέξης
(4) Στο τέλος της λέξης

Η ΜΚΕΤΤΟ αποτελεί το αρμόδιο όργανο για την τυποποίηση των γεωγραφικών ονομάτων της Κύπρου. Η σωστή χρήση των ορθών γεωγραφικών ονομάτων αποτελεί ουσιώδες στοιχείο αποτελεσματικής επικοινωνίας, παγκοσμίως και υποστηρίζει την κοινωνικο-οικονομική ανάπτυξη, την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος και την εθνική υιοδότηση.

Η τυποποίηση των γεωγραφικών ονομάτων αναγνωρίστηκε ως ένα σύστημα γλωσσικών ορθών και κατάλληλο για τη μεταγραφή του ελληνικού αλφάβητου σε ρωμαϊκό. Το σύστημα έχει επίσημα επικυρωθεί από τις Κυβερνήσεις της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου για γεωγραφικούς και διοικητικούς σκοπούς, και έχει χρησιμοποιηθεί σε χάρτες της Ελλάδας και σε χάρτες και τοπωνυμικά λεξικά της Κύπρου.

Ο πίνακας μεταγραφής του ελληνικού αλφάβητου στο ρωμαϊκό (ΕΛ.Ο.Τ.743) έγινε αποδεκτός από την Πέμπτη Διδασκική του Οργανισμού Ηνωμένων Εθνών ως πρότυπο του Διεθνούς Οργανισμού Τυποποίησης (ISO 843.3) και υιοθετήθηκε από το Υπουργείο Συμβούλιου.

Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με το έργο και τις ενέργειες της ΜΚΕΤΤΟ, μπορείτε να επισκεφθείτε την ιστοσελίδα www.geonoma.gov.cy

MONIMH KYΠPIAKH EΠITPOTH TYPOTΠOIHΣHΣ
ΓEOΓPAΦIKHΣ EΠIXEIMATIKHΣ
EΠHXEIMATIKHΣ TYPOTΠOIHΣHΣ
MKETTO 2017
© 2017
www.geonoma.gov.cy

Fig. 5: Poster for the standardization and transliteration of geographical names

4.10 Participation in Meetings and Conferences

In August 2017, the President of the Committee participated in the 30th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts for Geographical Names (UNGEGN), and the 11th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of the Geographical Names, that took place in New York. The president of the Committee was elected as Vice-President of the Conference, and presided a session of the Conference. He also participated in a panel discussion titled: “Making Geographical Names Data Accessible and Available”. During the Conference, the national report of Cyprus was submitted, along with a new book titled: “Gazetteer of Sea Geographical Names of Cyprus”.

In September 2018, the president of the Committee participated in the meetings of the Romano-Hellenic Committee of UNGEGN, and the International Scientific Symposium “Toponymy and Cartography between History and Geography”, that took place in Venice, and delivered a paper and a presentation titled: “Modern Maps, Geographic Information Systems and Toponymy in Cyprus”.

4.11 Publication of Papers

In May 2017, a paper of the Committee titled: “Making Geographical Names Accessible and Available”, was published in UNGEGN Bulletin no. 52, May 2017.

(<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/Bulletin/UNGEGN%20bulletin%2052.pdf>)

In November 2017, a paper of the Committee titled: “Collection and Preservation of the Geographical Names of Cyprus”, was published in UNGEGN Bulletin no. 53.

(https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/Bulletin/UNGEGN_bulletin_53_Final3.pdf)

In May 2018, a paper of the Committee titled: “Geographical Names Supporting Sustainable Development in Cyprus”, was published in UNGEGN Bulletin no. 54. The president of the Committee also designed the cover page of the bulletin.

(https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/Bulletin/UNGEGN_bulletin_54_finalver.pdf)

In September 2018, the president of the Committee participated in the meetings of the Romano-Hellenic Committee of UNGEGN, and the International Scientific Symposium “Toponymy and Cartography between History and Geography”, that took place in Venice, and delivered a paper and a presentation titled: “Modern Maps, Geographic Information Systems and Toponymy in Cyprus”. The paper will be published in the proceedings of the symposium.

In December 2018, a paper of the Committee titled: “Legislation on Geographical Names in Cyprus”, was published in UNGEGN Bulletin no. 55. The president of the Committee also designed the cover page of the bulletin.

(https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/Bulletin/UNGEGN_bulletin_55.pdf)

5. Concluding Remarks

Geographic names are a vitally important part of geospatial information, and they express tangibly the human activity on earth with meaning and memory.

Geographical names identify and reflect the history and cultural heritage of each country.

The respect of correct and legal geographical names and their proper use, effectively help to defuse political pressure and to promote peace among nations.

The UN calls strictly against any arbitrary change of historical-traditional geographical names, considering such actions as illegal and criminal.

CPCSGN, within the framework of its duties, supports these principles and internationally promotes the official geographical names of Cyprus by all available means. The CPCSGN strongly supports the efforts undertaken by the UN for the standardization of geographical names and aims to comply and implement the UN and UNGEGN Conferences resolutions for the standardization of geographical names.