

18 March 2019

English

**United Nations Group of Experts On
Geographical Names
2019 session
New York, 29 April – 3 May 2019
Agenda item 5(b) of the provisional agenda *
Reports: Divisions of the Group of Experts**

**Report of Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division
on its activity**

Submitted by the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division**

*GEGN.2/2019/1

**Prepared by the Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography

Summary

In the period between 2017 and 2019, the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (hereinafter – Division) included experts from the following 11 countries: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tadjikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Besides, experts from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia participated in the events of the Division as observers.

The Report covers meetings of the Division held in 2017 in Irkutsk (Russian Federation), in 2018 in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) where participants exchanged information on the issues related to national and international standardization of geographical names.

A substantial progress in the national standardization of geographical names achieved in Division's member-countries was acknowledged by the Report.

The Report underlines a successful collaboration of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division with the Baltic Division of the UNGEGN and the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Interstate Council on Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Earth Remote Sensing of the CIS Member-States.

The resolution to form the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names was passed at the Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held on 25 August – 3 September, 1992 in New York.

At this time, experts from the following 11 countries are involved in Division's work on permanent basis: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tadjikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Experts from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia participated in the meetings of the Division as observers.

Between 2017 and 2019, the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names held 2 working meetings:

in 2017 – in Irkutsk (Russia);

in 2018 – in Tashkent (Uzbekistan).

In 2017 (Irkutsk) one of the main issues of the meeting was the review of outcomes of the last Thirtieth Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names and the Eleventh UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (New-York).

In 2018 (Tashkent) the draft rules of procedure of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names and the draft agenda of the first session of the reorganized UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names were considered.

At the meetings, participants exchanged information on the status of national standardization of geographical names carried out in countries, national bodies for the standardization of geographical names, and legislation in the field of names of geographical objects, the status and prospects of development of national toponymic

databases, registers, prospects for the development of national toponymy, standardization of names of natural objects.

When analyzed, the information testifies about progress that has been recently made by the member-countries of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names in the following areas:

1. In all Division's countries, state laws to consolidate the legal framework for standardization, usage and preservation of national geographical names were adopted.

2. In Division's countries, official state bodies are appointed to take decisions on geographical names. Toponymic commissions are operational to coordinate efforts of the specialists from all organizations and agencies concerned in these activities.

3. State electronic catalogues, registers and database of geographical names are successfully developed. Many of them already meet the needs of state bodies, organizations, companies and civic community in official geographical names data. The volume of information services is increasing every year.

4. In most Division's countries, national Romanization systems are used.

5. In some member-countries, lists of exonyms are being compiled and published.

Exchange of information and experience that is a part of international cooperation contributed to the progress in the national standardization of geographical names made by the countries.

Collaboration of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division with the Baltic Division is successfully developed. Experts from Belarus, Russia and Ukraine participated in four meetings held by the Baltic Division.

Many of Division's member-countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tadjikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), for 20 years are actively cooperating with the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Interstate Council on Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Earth Remote Sensing of the CIS countries. The Working Group pursues the task to provide a regular exchange of information on all official changes in geographical names. As a result of this cooperation the e-Bulletin "Changes in Geographical Names in CIS countries" has been compiled and is being annually updated. The Bulletin includes information on more than 6,300 geographical names which have been legally changed in 11 countries since 1990. Along with the names in Russian the e-Bulletin comprises geographical names in a national language of a corresponding country. The Bulletin is available on the official site of Rosreestr (www.rosreestr.ru).

Azerbaijan and Bulgaria participated in the international data exchange project developed by the EuroGeographics.

Experts of the Division took part in the Eleventh UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names.