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## United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

**2021 session**

Virtual, 3–7 May 2021

Item 4 (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 Canada

#### Summary\*\*

Since the first session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, in 2019, the national coordinating body for place names in Canada, the Geographical Names Board of Canada, has made great strides in strategic planning, database automation and standardization, interactive map production, and board governance.

At its 123rd annual general meeting, held in October 2020, the Board approved a new forward-looking strategic plan to guide its direction and work in the coming five years. The strategic plan includes several priorities: review role, mandate and governance; enhance internal and external communication and collaboration; and improve database content and management. To better reflect the reality that indigenous place names and concerns are integral to all aspects and operations of the Board, this work has been incorporated into each of the strategic priorities.

In 2020, the Board's secretariat developed a data-harvesting tool to automatically extract data from a provincial application programming interface and enter it into the Canadian Geographical Names Database. Projects are under way to re-evaluate generic terminology, update the Board's application programming interface and public discovery tool and standardize the contents of the database.

In 2019, an interactive map, entitled "Stories from the land: indigenous place names in Canada", was released to highlight a selection of indigenous place names, as well as their language and meaning.

In 2021, it is expected that a new Chair and indigenous advisers will be appointed to the Board.

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\* [GEGN.2/2021/1](#).

\*\* The full report was prepared by Kristina Kwiatkowski and Steve Westley, Geographical Names Board of Canada secretariat, Natural Resources Canada. It will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2021/42/CRP.42, in the language of submission only, at [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd\\_session\\_2021/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/).

