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English

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

Second session

New York, 1 – 5 May 2023

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 Italy

Submitted by Italy **

Summary:

The Italian Geographic Military Institute, as the body in charge of compiling, updating and publishing the official map of Italy, ensures the standardization of geographical names through its own Commission for Italian Official Toponymy. In accordance with the relevant laws, the Commission acts in cooperation with other national, regional and provincial public institutions and with the support of academic organizations.

During the two-year period from 2021 to 2022, the following activities were carried out in Italy:

(a) Organization of the third international scientific symposium, on the theme “Permanence, transformation, substitution and oblivion of geographical names”, in Naples, in cooperation with the Romano-Hellenic Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names;

(b) Organization of the cartographic travelling exhibition on the theme “Naples lands and sea: from ancient to contemporary toponymy”, combined with a series of conferences on the standardization of geographical names, in close cooperation with the Italian Geographic Military Institute;

(c) Organization of the thirtieth International Cartographic Conference and the International Cartographic Exhibition, in Florence, from 14 to 18 December 2021;

(d) Final review phase of the Veneto toponymic database, which was launched following an agreement between the Commission for Italian Official Toponymy and the Veneto Region;

(e) Publication of the book *Atlante COVID-19: Geografie del Contagio in Italia* by the Italian Association of Geographers;

(f) Updating of the layout and content of the Romano-Hellenic Division website.

* GEGN.2/2023/1

** Prepared by Andrea CANTILE – Chairman of the IGMI’s Commission for Italian Official Toponymy.

During the period from 2023 to 2024, the following activities will be carried out in Italy:

(a) Organization of conferences combined with cartographic travelling exhibitions at universities in Rome (Sapienza University of Rome, the University of Rome Tor Vergata and Roma Tre University), with a final scientific panel on the standardization of geographical names at the Italian Geographic Society;

(b) Completion of the Veneto toponymic database;

(c) Implementation of the agreement between the Italian Geographic Military Institute and the Campania Region on the creation of a new toponymic database for the region;

(d) Organization of the International Geographical Union (IGU) thematic conference on the theme “The ocean and seas in geographical thought” at the University of Milano-Bicocca, during which the Joint IGU-International Cartographic Association (ICA) Commission will convene a session on geographical names entitled “Names and naming of oceans and seas as a specific and politically delicate issue”, to be held in Milan from 6 to 8 June 2023;

(e) Organization of the conference on “Literary, polar and extraterrestrial place names” by the Joint IGU-ICA Commission at the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rome, on 23 and 24 November 2023;

(f) Organization of the fourth international scientific symposium on geographical names, in cooperation with the Romano-Hellenic Division, in Italy, from 11 to 13 September 2024;

(g) Reprint and dissemination of the book *I Perché e i Nomi della Geografia* by Sandro Toniolo.

1. Progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the 2nd Session of UNGEGN.

In Italy, the Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI), as the body in charge of compiling, updating and publishing the Official Map of Italy, take cares of the standardization of geographical names through its own Commission for Italian Official Toponymy (CIOT-IGMI).

According to the Italian laws, CIOT-IGMI acts in cooperation with other national, regional and provincial public bodies and with the support of academic organizations.

During the two-year period 2021-2022 the following activities were carried out in Italy:

a) Final review phase of the Veneto's Toponymic Database

The Veneto Region toponymic database, started on the basis of the agreement between the Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI) and the Veneto Region, has now reached the final revision stage. At this level, the project provides for the verification and unification of the data present in the various national, regional and municipal archives, namely that of the IGMI Map of Italy, that of the Regional Technical Map and those of the Municipalities of the Veneto. To date, the phases of aggregation and harmonization of the original databases of the Region and of the IGM have been completed, reaching an adequate level of consistency of the database; in addition, a thorough examination of all toponyms was carried out to significantly improve the information quality of the digitized archive. At this stage, the Municipalities can propose changes.

b) New toponymic agreement between IGMI and the Campania Region

IGMI and the Campania Region - Directorate General for the Government of the Territory underwriting a cooperation agreement for increasing the National Geographical Names Database (DBTopo25K) with the toponyms contained in the Technical Regional Map of Campania at the scale of 1:10,000 and checking for correct spelling and pronunciation of all regional geographical names.

c) Publication of the proceedings of 2nd International Scientific Symposium of UNGEGN-RHD

IGMI published the proceedings of 2nd UNGEGN-RHD International Scientific Symposium, held in Venezia [Venice], Italia [Italy], from 26th to 28th September 2018 and focused on "Toponymy and Cartography between History and Geography". The proceedings of the symposium was edited by Andrea Cantile and Helen Kerfoot.

d) Organization of 3rd International Scientific Symposium of UNGEGN-RHD and publication of proceedings

Italy oversaw the organization of 3rd International Scientific Symposium of the UNGEGN, Romano-Hellenic Division, focused on the theme: "Permanence, substitution, transformation and the oblivion of the Geographical Names". The event held in Napoli [Naples], Italia [Italy], from 22nd to 24th September 2021. Many linguists, historians, geographers, planners and cartographers participated in the symposium, organized in close cooperation with the Italian Geographic Military Institute and the Regional Council of Campania – Directorate General for the Government of the Territory, and under the auspices of Italian Association of Geographers, Italian Association of Geography Teachers, Italian Cartographic Association, Italian Centre for Historical and Geographical Studies, Italian Geographical Society and Society of Geographical Studies (Italia).

This edition of the symposium was combined with a cartographic exhibition which, at the end of the event, was made itinerant and was exhibited in the Mediceo Castle of Ottaviano, in the State Archives of Naples, in the Provincial College of Surveyors of Caserta, in the "Villa Arbusto" in Ischia island and in Procida island, that during 2021 was the Italian Capital of Culture.

IGMI published the proceedings of 3rd UNGEGN-RHD International Scientific Symposium, edited by Andrea cantile and Helen Kerfoot.

e) Organization of the 30th International Conference of Cartography

Italy also oversaw the organization of the 30th International Cartography Conference held in Florence from 14 to 18 December 2021. Among the 36 topics discussed in the Conference, as usual, there was

also a collective reflection on "Toponymy and Cartography". For details on this activity, see <https://www.icc2021.net/>.

f) Publication of the "Covid-19 Atlas. Geographies of contagion in Italy"

The Atlas (Italian title "Atlante COVID-19. Geografie del contagio in Italia"), editors Emauela Casti and Andrea Riggio, showed the weight assumed by physical, territorial and/or social factors (morphology and climate, population density and mobility, health and welfare system) in the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in Italy, their relevance both in promoting contagion and in the establishment of situations of high risk of contracting a serious form of the disease.

The different phenomena of the spread of the pandemic that emerged from the research and processing of statistical data showed three distinct territorial situations, named by the editors of the atlas "Three Italys".

2. National programs

During the period 2023-2024 the following activities will be carried out in Italy:

- a) Dissemination activities aimed at spreading the importance of the standardization of geographical names through the organization of conferences combined with a traveling cartographic exhibition at the three Universities of Rome (Sapienza - University of Rome, University of Tor Vergata and University of Roma Tre). The cycle of these university conferences will end with the organization of a scientific panel at the Italian Geographic Society, in Rome, on the contribution that the Standardization of Geographical Names can offer for the achievement of the SDGs.
- b) Completion of the Veneto's Toponymic Database.
- c) Implementation of the agreement between IGMI and the Campania Region for the creation of a new Campania's Toponymic Database.
- d) Organization of IGU Thematic Conference on the theme "The Ocean and Seas in Geographical Thought" by University of Milano-Bicocca, within which the Joint IGU-ICA Commission planned a Geographical names session titled "Names and naming of oceans and seas as a specific and politically delicate issue", Milano (Italia), 6-8 June 2023.
- e) Organization of the Conference on "Literary, polar and extraterrestrial place names" by the Joint IGU-ICA Commission, Roma, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 23-24 November 2023.
- f) Organization of the 4th UNGEGN-RHD International Scientific Symposium on geographical names (Italia, 11-13 September 2024).
- g) Reprint and dissemination of the book *I perché e i nomi della Geografia* ["The whys and the names of Geography"] by Sandro Toniolo, to extend in Italy the knowledge of the meanings of the main place names around the world (Published by IGMI).