17 January 2023

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United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
2023 session
New York, 1–5 May 2023

Documentation for the session

Note by the Secretariat

Languages of submission and deadlines

1.   The six official languages of the United Nations, namely, Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, will be the official languages of the session.

2.   Governments are requested to email the Secretariat, at their earliest convenience, but not later than 13 March 2023, the full-length documents (national reports, divisional reports, working group reports and technical papers) prepared in respect of items on the provisional agenda of the 2023 session (GEGN.2/2023/1). The full-length documents should not exceed 3,300 words (approximately 10 pages). They should be submitted with summaries, which should not exceed 500 words. Summaries should be submitted before 20 January 2023 in order for them to be translated and issued in the six official languages.

3.   It is vital that Governments and experts comply with the above-mentioned deadlines so that their documents may be issued and made accessible on the website of the Group of Experts,[1] before the convening of the session.

Theme of the session

4.   The theme of the 2023 session is "Strengthening relationships, links and connections in geographical names standardization and for sustainable development and pandemic recovery", with a special emphasis on Sustainable Development Goal 17 (partnerships for the Goals). The theme is aligned with the strategic plan and programme of work, 2021–2029, under strategy 2, on relationships, links and connections. It is also aligned with the theme of the 2023 high-level political forum on sustainable development, which, according to General Assembly resolution 75/290 B, is "Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels". The alignment of themes serves to support resolution 70/1, in which the

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[1] See https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/.

Assembly requested that functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums reflect the integrated nature of the Goals as well as the interlinkages between them. Governments are encouraged to consider the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Goals in their work on the standardization of geographical names. They are also welcome to focus on the theme of the session and on general issues and the challenges associated with the standardization of geographical names.

Formatting and presentation of documents

5.   Documents should be in Microsoft Word and be emailed to the Secretariat (see para. 11). They should include references to relevant resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and recommendations of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. Most importantly, they should also include a reference to the item of the provisional agenda under which the document is to be considered. Governments are encouraged to include a final paragraph in each document, under the heading "Action to be taken by the Group of Experts", in which they would invite the Group, for example, to take note of, discuss or endorse a set of recommendations.[2] Governments should be aware that, in order to ensure that the work of the session is completed at the scheduled meetings, some documents may be considered for information and not for discussion.

6.   The full-length documents will be distributed in the official language in which they were submitted. Governments should ensure that acronyms and abbreviations are spelled out the first time they appear. If numerous acronyms and abbreviations are used, they should be set out in a list at the beginning of the document.

National reports
(Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda)

7.   In accordance with the provisions set out in resolution V/7 of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names,[3] Governments are requested to adhere to the guidelines below when drafting their national reports on progress made since the 2021 session of the Group of Experts. National reports should include the following:

(a)   Summary, of not more than 500 words, outlining the main issues discussed;

(b)   Background information or historical sketch (only for countries that did not present national reports at previous conferences);

(c)   Discussion of goals and national programmes;

(d)   Discussion of problems, solutions and achievements during the reporting period;

(e)   Update on actions taken to support the implementation of the strategic plan and programme of work, 2021–2029, with particular attention paid to strategy 2, on relationships, links and connections;

(f)   Conclusions and recommendations.

8.   Some information on national standardization may be more appropriately submitted as separate papers for discussion under other agenda items.

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[2] See https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2nd_session_2021/ for examples of final paragraphs, which appear under the "Documents" tab.

[3] Available at www.ngii.go.kr/portal/ungn/mainEn.do.

Divisional reports
(Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda)

9.   Reports submitted by a division of the Group of Experts should include information on activities and issues of common interest to Member States represented in the division. Some information referring to individual countries may be more appropriately included in national reports. In addition, some topics may be well suited for allocation and discussion under other agenda items.

Report of the session

10.   A report on the session will be issued.

11.   Correspondence should be addressed to the Secretariat (geoinfo_unsd@un.org). Courtesy copies should also be addressed to Cecille Blake (blake1@un.org) and Vilma Frani (frani@un.org).

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