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English

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

**2023 session**

New York, 1 – 5 May 2023

**Item 12 of the provisional agenda \***

**Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity, including  
indigenous minority and regional languages and multilingual issues.**

## **Geographic Names and UNESCO World Heritage sites in Saudi Arabia**

### **Summary \*\***

The UNESCO World Heritage List is a very prestigious list that reflects on an international cultural dialogue. Saudi Arabia has an impressive six UNESCO World Heritage sites – that reflect, both, on the vast and diverse history of the country, in addition to the efforts to preserve this history. These sites are Al-Hijr Archaeological Site (2008), At-Turaif District in ad-Dir'iyah (2010), Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah (2014), Rock Art in the Hail (2015), Al-Ahsa Oasis, an Evolving Cultural Landscape (2018), and Himā Cultural Area (2021). The research aims to study the issue of the relationship between toponymy and cultural heritage in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This discussion will analyze key features of cultural heritage, the links with toponymical studies and also provide geographical, historical, linguistic and cultural information on the geographic names of UNESCO sites in Saudi Arabia.

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\* GEGN.2/2023/1

\*\* The full report was prepared by Ali A. Aldosari (Ph.D) Saudi Geographical Society, King Saud University [sgs@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:sgs@ksu.edu.sa). The report will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2023/102/CRP.102, in the language of submission only, at [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd\\_session\\_2023/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/).