



UNITED NATIONS GROUP OF EXPERTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

# INFORMATION BULLETIN

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## Inside this issue:

▪ <b>Preface</b>	
Message from the Chairperson	1
▪ <b>News from Headquarters</b>	
From the Secretariat	3
▪ <b>In Memoriam</b>	
F. J. Ormeling (Senior)	4
▪ <b>From the Divisions</b>	
French-Speaking Division	6
▪ <b>From the Working Groups</b>	
Working Group on Exonyms	7
Working Group on Publicity and Funding	9
Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy	10
Working Group on Romanization Systems	12
Working Group on Toponymic Terminology	13
Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation	15
▪ <b>From the Countries</b>	
Germany	16
Iran	20
Israel	21
Lithuania	22
Sudan	23
United States	25
▪ <b>Meetings</b>	
16 <sup>th</sup> UNRCC-AP	27
22 <sup>nd</sup> UNGEGN	27

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of UNGEGN, 2004

Anticipated time and place:

April 20-29, 2004

UN HQ, New York

### UNGE GN website:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo>

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## Impressum

UNGEEN  
**I**NFORMATION  
**B**ULLETIN  
(FORMERLY NEWSLETTER)

The *Information Bulletin of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names* (formerly UNGEEN Newsletter) is issued approximately twice a year by the Secretariat of the Group. The Secretariat is established within the Statistics Division (UNSD), Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Secretariat of the United Nations. It publishes contributions/reports from the Experts of the Group, its Linguistic/Geographical Divisions and its Working Groups. Contributions for the Information Bulletin can only be considered when they are made available

in digital form. They should be sent to the following address:

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## Preface

### Message from the Chairperson

Dear Experts

As I write, nearly six months have passed since the very successful Eighth Conference in Berlin, and there are now various news items to pass on to you.

#### UNGEGN Bureau

At the 21st session of UNGEGN, we took the decision to recommend to ECOSOC that the UNGEGN statute be amended to provide for two Vice-Chairpersons and two Rapporteurs. I am pleased to tell you that this was endorsed by ECOSOC in October 2002 (ECOSOC decision E/2002/306).

As a result, the UNGEGN Bureau from 2002 to 2007 is now as follows:

#### *Chairperson*

Ms. Helen Kerfoot (Canada)

#### *Vice-Chairpersons*

Mr. Brahim Atoui (Algeria)

Mr. Jörn Sievers (Germany)

#### *Rapporteurs*

Mr. Brian Goodchild (Australia)

Mr. Donall Mac Giolla Easpaig (Ireland)

#### **Mr. Hermann Habermann's departure**

During the last Conference we had excellent support from the United Nations team, under the

leadership of Mr. Hermann Habermann. We were certainly sorry to see the departure of Mr. Habermann from the United Nations in early December, but do wish him well in his new position as Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of the United States Census Bureau. At this time Mr. Willem deVries is acting as Head of the Statistics Division until the position is filled.

#### UNGEGN Divisions

At the last UNGEGN session, a record must undoubtedly have been set, with all the 22 divisions represented.

I urge Chairpersons of divisions to reach out and encourage standardization activities in their linguistic/geographical areas and to provide a focal point for information exchange and discussion in whatever ways are possible in the different circumstances around the world. For some divisions, there is still the opportunity for those who wish to take the initiative to start an active programme of cooperation. Please contact us if your division has been inactive and you would like to start some liaison work.

#### UNGEGN Working Groups

In addition to Divisions, UNGEGN's work is continued through the efforts of Working Groups. To the seven existing working groups, two new ones were added by UNGEGN to address particular resolutions from the Eighth Conference. Mr. Milan Orožen Adamič is convening the Working Group on Exonyms, and Mr. Donall Mac Giolla Easpaig is convening the Working Group on Pronunciation. Experts interested in participating in the tasks of any Working Group should contact the convenors (as listed below).

We are pleased to say that some Working Groups have already been active and/or are planning meetings in 2003 or 2004. For example, a successful toponymy training course has already been organized in Sudan and another is planned in Algeria, the development of two UNGEGN publications is in hand, and the Working Group on Exonyms will meet (in conjunction with the East Central and South-East Europe Division) in September 2003. Further information about these, and other Working Group and Division activities, will be found in this Newsletter.

#### **Some UNGEGN documents on the web**

We appreciate the assistance received from the Map Collection of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in New York to make UNGEGN documents more widely available. The UNGEGN reports and technical documents held by the Map Collection have now been scanned and put on the UN website as .pdf files. These holdings can be accessed at <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/maplib/ungegn.htm>.

## **22nd session of UNGEGN, 2004**

Toponymy Training Courses  
Gazetteers and Toponymic Data Files  
Terminology  
Romanization  
Country names  
Publicity and Funding  
Evaluation and Implementation  
Exonyms  
Pronunciation

Possible locations and dates for the 22nd session of UNGEGN have been considered. As a result, conference facilities have now been reserved at UN HQ in New York for eight working days: Tuesday April 20 to Thursday April 29, 2004. These dates will receive confirmation in the UN schedule in July this year. Any further information will be posted on the UNGEGN website as it becomes available. The Note Verbale will be distributed later this year.

Mr. Ferjan Ormeling (Netherlands)  
Mr. Randall Flynn (USA)  
Mr. Naftali Kadmon (Israel)  
Mr. Peeter Päll (Estonia)  
Ms. Sylvie Lejeune (France)  
Mr. David Munro (UK)  
Mr. Ki-Suk Lee (Republic of Korea)  
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## **Future activities**

If you have information to be distributed on UNGEGN activities, please contact Mr. Amor Laaribi (laaribi@un.org).

Should you wish to contribute to activities of UNGEGN working groups in addressing UN Conference resolutions, please contact the appropriate convenor:

I wish you success in your ventures and look forward to hearing news of your activities in the near future.

## **Helen Kerfoot**

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## News from Headquarters

### From the Secretariat

Dear UNGEGN experts

As you will notice, the title of this publication is no longer UNGEGN “Newsletter”; it has been changed to UNGEGN “Information Bulletin”. A newsletter is generally a leaflet of 2-3 pages, providing brief information on group activities. The UNGEGN publication, which covers in some detail the activities of the Group, does not fall in this category. Furthermore, in the 21<sup>st</sup> UNGEGN session, continued support was expressed for the value of the UNGEGN publication. It was suggested not to limit its content to conference information, but rather to continue to include national activities and to expand distribution to Permanent Missions, Embassies, etc.

#### UNCSGN and UNGEGN reports

The report of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names is now published. A copy of this report is mailed to each of you with this Information Bulletin. In addition, a summary report with a list of the resolutions of the Eighth Conference will be submitted to ECOSOC for adoption at its next meeting, scheduled for July 2003.

The UNGEGN Secretariat has also prepared and submitted the report of the 21<sup>st</sup> UNGEGN session for publication in the six languages of the United Nations. The report is now in final stages of publication and will be distributed during the year.

In addition, an electronic copy of the reports of the 21<sup>st</sup> UNGEGN session and the 8<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names will be made available on our website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geo/info/>).

#### UNEGN website

On the UNGEGN website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geo/info/>), you may find it useful to access an “Information note” (the equivalent of a Press Release) from the last Conference. This may be found on the home page under “News and Upcoming Events”, then under the Eighth Conference.

We are currently in the process of updating the texts on the pages of the UNGEGN web site. Soon these updates, together with more of the technical papers from the recent Conference, should be available for general access. The UNGEGN Secretariat, however, still welcomes your comments, and would like to reiterate its request that changes to

Convenorship and membership of Working Groups, and Chairpersons of Divisions be sent to the Secretariat for timely update of the website.

#### 16<sup>th</sup> UN Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP)

The 16<sup>th</sup> UNRCC-AP will be held in Okinawa, Japan, 14-18 July 2003. The UNGEGN Secretariat is continuing to forge ties with the UN Regional Cartographic Conferences, in recognition that cartography, GIS and Geographical Names are crucial to the promotion of geographic information. Therefore, we invite and encourage all of you, and in particular the UNGEGN experts from the Asia and Pacific region, to attend this Conference.

#### 22<sup>nd</sup> UNGEGN

Plans are being made for the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of UNGEGN to be held at UN HQ, April 20-29, 2004.

#### Information Bulletin No. 27

It is proposed to issue the next Bulletin in December 2003.

I look forward to meeting you in 2004, if not before.

**Amor Laaribi**

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## IN MEMORIAM

### Ferdinand Jan Ormeling (1912-2002)

The world has lately lost one of the 20th century's great universalists of cartography, toponymy and geographical science. Many among us remember Fer, as he was known among his friends and colleagues, as one of the most active members of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names in the seventies and eighties. While his primary field of activity was cartography, he left a distinct mark on the deliberations of the United Nations bodies dealing with toponymy. Particularly strong was his devotion to the professional training of young – and not so young – people and to the furthering of the standardization of geographical names. His interest in and care for developing countries (again, practical and not just theoretical) was always close to his heart.

Ferdinand Jan Ormeling was born on 12 April 1912. After completing his primary studies at Hilversum High School he studied geography and history at the Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht – where later his son Ferjan was awarded his doctorate in cartography. In the inter-war

years he taught at grammar schools in Hilversum and den Haag. In WW II he had to go underground in order to avoid forced labour for the occupiers. In this war, Japan had invaded the Dutch East Indies, and in 1945 Ormeling was sent to Batavia (today Jakarta) and worked as a geographer and cartographer with the new Geographical Institute. In 1949 the former Dutch colony attained independence as the Republic of Indonesia, and most of the Dutch personnel returned to the mother country. However, because of his special knowledge and qualities Ormeling was asked by the new government to stay, and in 1950 he was appointed head of the Geographical Institute. Moreover, his special research project, "The Timor problem, a geographical interpretation of an underdeveloped island" earned him a doctorate from the University of Indonesia.

In 1956 he returned to the Netherlands and joined the firm of J.B. Wolters in Groningen for eight years as a cartographer, after which he became a consultant-specialist in

cartography – the field which now constituted his major interest. In 1964 he was appointed Professor of Economic Geography at the University of Amsterdam and in 1971 in Enschede – Professor and Head of the new department of cartography at the ITC International Training Centre (today the International Institute for Aerospace Survey and Earth Science) catering, very much in his spirit, for students from developing countries.

Ormeling's organizational abilities led to his helping to form the Royal Netherlands Geographical Society and the Dutch Cartographic Society; he chaired the former until 1968, and served as president of the latter from 1967 to 1971. Widening his international interests, he was involved in forming the International Cartographic Association in 1959, and became its highly-esteemed Secretary-Treasurer in 1964. After three four-year terms of office in this capacity he was elected President of the ICA in 1976, serving for eight years. With his many global contacts he was indeed the

Flying Dutchman. It is no wonder that owing to his leadership qualities, his organizational talent, his captivating speaking ability and last but not least his ready humour, Ormeling became known as Mr. ICA. As just a single example: while conferring the ICA Carl Mannerfelt medal on the somewhat short-statured Sandor Rado of Hungary in front of a too-high positioned microphone, Ormeling announced "Microphone lower, or Rado higher". Several years later he himself was awarded the same coveted medal.

Having spent many years in a multilingual environment it came as no surprise that Ormeling directed part of his seemingly unbounded energy at linguistic problems, and in particular at the standardization of geographical names. His work in cartography and atlas production served as a natural basis for this activity. In 1967, the year I first met him at the International Cartographic Conference in Amsterdam, he attended the first United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Geneva as the representative of the Netherlands, submitting his country's national report.. From the second conference onwards reports were presented not only by separate states but by the

(then) 14 geographic-linguistic divisions, and Ormeling was a member of the Dutch and German-speaking division.

He attended nearly all successive UN conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and sessions of the Group of Experts on Geographical Names. In the report of the third conference we find that "the Netherlands [announced that it] might be able to proceed with a training course on toponymy". Indeed, this subject was perhaps the chief contribution of Ormeling to the standardization of geographical names and led to his being elected convenor of the UNGEGN working group on education and training.

In June 1982 he organized the first UNGEGN training course in Cisarua, Indonesia. As a result, the fourth conference held in Geneva in Aug.-Sept. 1982, stated in resolution No. 6, that "recognizing the success of the first pilot course in toponymy held in Cisarua,... recommends the holding of similar courses" elsewhere. Ormeling then organized a second course in Cipanas, Indonesia, in 1989. Since then, many training courses in toponymy and the standardization of geographical names were held by the UNGEGN working group on

training courses, chaired since 1987 by his son, Prof. Ferjan Ormeling jr. Ormeling senior was a staunch supporter of the need for the reduction of exonyms, a trend officially advocated already by the second conference in 1972 but lately being somewhat questioned by certain central and East European countries.

After the fifth conference in 1987 Ormeling retired, but at the sixth conference in New York in 1992 he stood in as convenor of the working group for his son who was unable to attend. On this occasion his wife Rini, called affectionately "mother of the ICA", fell seriously ill and had to be hospitalized in New York, but later made a full though slow recovery. Rini had been Fer's loyal companion and support for many years and now survives him. We join her in her bereavement at her great loss and the deep void caused by the passing away of her illustrious husband on 1 May 2002. Our sympathy is extended also to Prof. Ormeling, jr.; it seems that his father founded a two-generation dynasty of cartographer-toponymists in the best Dutch tradition.

**Naftali Kadmon**

*Israel*

### La Division francophone du GENUNG

La huitième conférence des Nations Unies sur la normalisation des noms géographiques et la 21ème session du Groupe d'experts se sont tenues à Berlin entre le 26 août et le 6 septembre 2002. Comme à l'accoutumée, ces réunions ont donné une forte impulsion aux travaux en cours, et notamment à ceux de la division francophone.

Pour ce qui nous concerne, les principaux résultats sont les suivants :

- deux réunions de la division se sont tenues (les 27 et 30 août). Les comptes rendus sont consultables sur le site de la division <http://www.divisionfrancophone.org>
- les membres m'ont fait l'honneur de me réélire comme président de la division.
- Mme Sylvie Lejeune a été élue secrétaire de la division.
- le nombre de participants à la division a sensiblement augmenté puisque la réunion du 30 août a rassemblé 15 participants représentant 11 pays.
- au cours de ces réunions, deux textes importants ont été adoptés : le règlement intérieur de la division et le nouveau programme de travail pour la période 2002-2007. Ces documents sont consultables sur le site <http://www.divisionfrancophone.org>
- l'Agence Intergouvernementale de la francophonie a financé une participation à la conférence de Berlin (voyage et hébergement).

Des difficultés dues à des délais trop serrés ont malheureusement empêché d'autres financements dont le principe était acquis par l'Agence. Une meilleure coordination devrait nous permettre de remédier à ces difficultés lors de la prochaine réunion.

- Enfin, la base de données des exonymes français (baptisée Bougainville) a fait l'objet d'une présentation technique. On trouvera ci-dessous une note explicative concernant cette base de données.

#### Bougainville

Dans le cadre de leur programme de coopération, les autorités toponymiques de la France et du Québec (Canada) collaborent à la mise sur pied d'une base de données sur les exonymes français du monde, afin de renseigner les francophones sur les noms officiels locaux des lieux étrangers et pour permettre à des locuteurs non francophones de s'informer des noms qui désignent couramment en français des lieux situés en dehors des territoires où la langue française est officielle. Bougainville - c'est le nom de la base de données - contenait, au 19 décembre 2002, 898 fiches d'exonymes diffusées sur le Web à l'adresse [http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/recherche\\_bd.htm](http://www.divisionfrancophone.org/recherche_bd.htm). Ce projet est maintenant inscrit au programme de travail de la Division francophone du Groupe d'experts des Nations Unies pour

les noms géographiques. Nous rappelons que cette base de données a fait l'objet d'une présentation à Berlin, fin août 2002, au cours de la 8e Conférence des Nations Unies sur la normalisation des noms géographiques, par M. Daniel Hazard de l'Institut géographique national de France. M. Hazard a effectué par la suite une mission auprès de la Commission de toponymie du Québec (Canada), en octobre 2002, pour collaborer à la mise au point technique du projet. L'information de Bougainville, qui est accessible au public par l'intermédiaire d'un moteur de recherche, se répartit en douze champs (nom français; article défini à employer le cas échéant; genre de l'exonyme; variante française; classe de l'entité; nature de l'entité; pays; code ISO du pays; nom local; langue du nom local; code ISO de la langue du nom local; remarque). De leur côté, les toponymistes québécois Henri Dorion et Jean Poirier ont poursuivi des travaux de recherche en vue d'enrichir le contenu de Bougainville.

Enfin, pour ce qui est des travaux en cours et à venir de la division, il convient de se rapporter au nouveau programme de travail (2002-2007), consultable sur le site de la division.

**Pierre PLANQUES**

*Le président de la division*

# From the Working Groups

## Working Group on Exonyms

This Working Group was formed in September 2002, as recommended by resolution 4 of the Eighth Conference (Berlin, 27 August - 5 September, 2002). The need for such a group had also been expressed at earlier discussions (Frankfurt am Main, 2000 and Berchtesgaden, 2001).

### Current work plan

Various conference resolutions now exist on the treatment, use and reduction of exonyms in the context of geographical names standardization and effective UN communication. The Working Group will be developing its work plan to encourage progress in addressing these UN resolutions. Those interested in participating in Working Group activities should contact the Convenor.

### Web site

It is planned to create the Working Group web site, where discussion details and membership will be posted. Ideas and contributions for the web site creation are welcome.

### Meeting of the Working Group

A meeting will be held in Praha (Prague), September 24 - 26, 2003, in conjunction with a

meeting of the East Central and South-East Europe Division.

Proposals and ideas for the Working Group meeting are welcome so that an agenda can be created for Prague. So far we have agenda items for consideration from Peter Jordan (Austria) and from Paul Woodman (UK).

### *From Peter Jordan:*

Mr. Jordan has prepared criteria for the use of exonyms. In his opinion they are important for the decision whether an exonym should or should not be used. This list could also be called an approach towards a differentiated use of exonyms.

#### *Criteria for the use of exonyms*

*(Peter Jordan)*

##### *(1) Object-related criteria*

Importance of the object  
Nature or culture of the object  
Spatial distance object-receiver community  
Time-layer of the object

##### *(2) Endonym-related criteria*

Linguistic structure of the endonym  
Script of the endonym

##### *(3) Criteria referring to the relation donor-receiver community*

Linguistic relation donor-receiver language

Difficulty for the receiver community to spell and pronounce the endonym correctly

Cultural (other than linguistic) relation donor-receiver community  
Prestige, communication value of the donor language

##### *(4) Medium-related criteria*

Means of communication used  
Actual conditions of medium use

##### *(5) Criteria related to the level of communication*

Official or unofficial character of communication  
Intention, atmosphere of communication

##### *(6) Audience-related criteria*

Linguistic scope of the audience

### *From Paul Woodman:*

Mr. Woodman has suggested some research proposals for the Working Group ...

- (1)* The question of the sensitivity of exonyms
- (2)* Whether the word "official" should form part of our understanding of exonyms and endonyms
- (3)* The question of exonyms across scripts (e.g. the Chinese reading of European and Japanese names)

## Working Group members

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## Milan Orožen Adamič

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*<http://www.zrc-sazu.si/moa/>*

## Working Group on Publicity and Funding

### Working Group meetings in Berlin, August-September 2002

Two meetings of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding were held during the 8th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in Berlin last summer.

At a meeting held on 30th August, twelve experts including new representatives from Australia, South Africa, and Vanuatu reviewed the remit of the Working Group which is (1) to disseminate information, both of a popular and professional nature, on the work of the UNGEGN and the benefits to be derived from the standardization of geographical names and (2) to investigate methods and means of ensuring that adequate funds be allocated to the activities of the Group of Experts.

With respect to the first aim of the Working Group, the Convenor noted that since the publication in 2000 of the English language version of the brochure *Consistent Use of Place Names* that document had been reproduced in eight languages. It was agreed that every effort should be made to distribute this brochure as widely as possible and to encourage its publication in other languages with the approval of the UN Secretariat. In addition to this,

the launch of the UNGEGN website in 2002 now provides a valuable tool in helping to advance the dissemination of information.

In order to reach both government agencies and the wider public, the Working Group agreed that UNGEGN members should be encouraged to write articles in their local and national press as well as contribute towards the development of exhibition display material. It was suggested that place-name societies be kept informed of UNGEGN activities and that the work of UNGEGN be promoted through publicity at conferences of groups such as the International Cartographic Association and the International Geographical Union.

At a second meeting of the Working Group, also attended by convenors and representatives of other Working Groups, the Convenor reported that the UN would be willing to consider providing financial support for the production of selected documents and attendance at training courses. The Working Group considered priorities in the short and long term and it was agreed that a basic manual, a list of country

names, a guide to romanization systems and a guide to toponymic data exchange formats should form the basis of two publications to be prepared for submission to the UN in 2003 for publication in 2004. Notification of training courses to be organized by other Working Groups and Divisions during the next two years indicated a need for funding to assist in making these events accessible to delegates from developing countries wishing to promote the standardization of geographical names.

A resolution requesting support from the UN for these activities was drafted and tabled during the conference and a small editorial group comprising David Munro, Helen Kerfoot, Botolv Helleland, Ferjan Ormeling and Peter Raper are now in the process of working with UNGEGN experts in the preparation of essential documents to be published in 2004.

In the longer term, it was suggested that funding should be sought for the purchase of a font developer and for the development of a web course on toponymy.

**David Munro**

*Convenor, Working Group on Publicity and Funding*

## Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Report on the first UN toponymy course for East Africa, Khartoum January 29 - February 7, 2003

### General organisation

The Ministry of the Environment and Physical development of Sudan had invited the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy to provide a toponymy course for East Africa in Khartoum in February 2003. Local organizer of the course was Eng. Nasr Ibrahim al-Hassanain, General Secretary of the Sudan Committee on Geographical Names and expert of Sudan in UNGEGN.

For an audience of 46 participants (half of them women!) a team of lecturers presented a 10-day introductory course on toponymy. The audience consisted of members of the Sudan Committee on Geographical Names, chaired by Prof Yousif al-Khalifa Abo Baker- Chairman of the Committee, representatives of various ministries and university departments in Khartoum, and from the surveying sections in the provinces. Representatives of the other member countries of the East Africa Division of the UNGEGN had been invited but were unable to attend; the course material has been sent out to them after the course.

The venues, logistics, registration and necessary presentation hardware (data projectors, video, computers)

were organised by Eng. Nasr Ibrahim al-Hassanain of the Ministry of the Environment and Physical Development.

### Lecturers:

The team of lecturers consisted of:

- Prof Yousif al-Khalifa Abo Baker, University of Khartoum
- Prof. Al Amin Abu Manga- Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum
- Prof. Herman Bell, Exeter University, Institute of Nubian Studies, United Kingdom
- Dr Andreas Illert, Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie, Frankfurt, Germany
- Prof Ferjan Ormeling, Utrecht University, the Netherlands.

Travel and accommodation of Illert and Ormeling has been sponsored by the United Nations Statistics Division; the Sudan Ministry of the Environment and Physical Development had invited Prof Bell. Illert and Ormeling attended the course from January 29-February 4. Bell arrived February 1 and stayed to the end.

### Programme:

The course had the following programme :

#### Wednesday 29/1/03

- Opening, with a reading of the Quran, followed by addresses from

1. Prof Yousif al-Khalifa Abo Baker.(Chairman of the Sudan Committee on Geographical Names

2. Ferjan Ormeling (Convenor of the UNGEGN Working Group on Toponymy Courses

3. Al-Tigani Adam al-Taher.(Minister of the Environment and Physical Development)

- Introduction to the naming process (Ormeling)
- Functions of geographical names (Ormeling)
- National agencies, models and procedures (Illert)

#### Thursday 30/1/03

- Demonstration of Gazetteers (Illert)

- Toponymy and languages (Ormeling)

- Writing systems (Ormeling)  
Script transformation systems (Ormeling)

- Multilingual areas (Ormeling)

#### Friday 31/1/03

- Organisation of names collection/fieldwork (Ormeling)

- Afternoon: free

#### Saturday 1/2/03

- Fieldwork: Names Collection in the al-Kabbashi area, 40 km north of Khartoum on the river Nile (Gorani\*, Illert, Nasr Ibrahim al-Hassanain\*, Ormeling)

#### Sunday 2/2/03

- National Atlas production (Ormeling)

- Preparation of the names lists for input into the computer (Bell, Abu-Manga, Illert)

- Office processing of

geographical names (Illert)

### **Monday 3/2/03**

- Recheck of the collected data in the fieldwork area

### **Tuesday 4/2/03**

- Preparing simple datafiles as tables (Illert)
- Entering geographical names into datafiles (Illert)
- Automated map lettering (Illert)
- Meal offered by Dr Al-Fadel A. Adem, undersecretary of the Ministry of the Environment and Physical Development)

### **Wednesday 5/2/03**

- Rendering non-Arabic names in Arabic script (Bell, Abo Baker)
- Application of the modified Beirut system for transliteration of Arabic into Latin script and vice-versa (Bell)
- Rendering Nubian language (from North Sudan) toponyms in Arabic script (Bell)

### **Thursday 6/2/03**

- Rendering South- and East Sudanese languages into Arabic script (Abu-Manga)

### **Friday 7/2/03**

- General issues in the application of Arabic script for gazetteers (Abo Baker)

### **Closure**

\*) In addition to the lecturers listed, Mr Mohammed Gorani, Head Department of Surveying Engineering, University of Khartoum contributed to the interviews and data collecting methods; Mr Nasr Ibrahim al-Hassanain, General Secretary of the Sudan Committee on Geographical Names had organised the logistics of the fieldwork.

### **Course material**

The following material was handed out to the participants

- Handout of the Power Point presentations (prepared in Utrecht University, the Netherlands)

- Lecture notes (100 pages, prepared by Mr K. Hans Stabe, Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie, Germany)

- Conversion of Arabic to Latin characters (Amended Beirut system) (prepared at the University of Exeter)

- Text of the Lectures on data files (prepared at the Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie, Germany)

During the course, all lectures and ensuing discussions were videoed by Mr Haytham Ahmad Mukhtar for further reference and use in countries of the East Africa Division of UNGEGN. Mr Mukhtar also photographed the proceedings. Mr Nasr had organised a small exhibition of relevant map material.

### **Other aspects**

During the lectures on February 2, 2003, one of the lecturers and the president and general secretary of the Sudan Committee on Geographical Names attended a meeting called by Sadig Elamin, GIS consultant to UNOCHA, at the UNDP Khartoum headquarters. This meeting aimed at the creation of a joint gazetteer for the Sudan, combining the gazetteer of the Survey of Sudan (50 000 entries), the village name list of the Central Bureau of Statistics (75 000 names), a NIMA list (3000 entries) and the names list in use in the southern provinces. Because of the many existing homonyms and allonyms humanitarian operations were

thwarted or mixed up, with the ensuing possible loss of life. The meeting was further attended by representatives of the Sudan Central Bureau of Statistics and the United Nations World Food Programme. It was agreed that an attempt would be made to combine the various lists, with cross-references for the allonyms and further elaboration of the homonyms by indicating the provinces where they were situated. The possible faulty coordinate references were to be corrected by GPS-readings; the UN World Food Programme would entertain a project proposal for the latter. It was further agreed that the representatives of the Sudan Committee on Geographical Names would submit a proposal for such a project including a pilot that could be started right away. From this meeting it transpired that the initiative to organise a toponymy course in Sudan was most timely and to the point.

### **Certification**

The participants received a diploma, signed by Dr Illert, Prof Ormeling, Prof Bell and Mr Nasr Ibrahim al-Hassanain

### **Outreach**

The Sudanese television paid attention to the opening of the course; its English-language programme also interviewed Prof. Ormeling and Eng. Nasr al-Hassanain. The course was also reflected in the newspapers.

### **Ferjan Ormeling**

*Convenor, Working Group on Toponymy Training Courses*

## Working Group on Romanization Systems

Following the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in August-September 2002, the Working Group on Romanization Systems has been updating the report submitted to the Conference.

In February, 2003 version 2.2 of the Report on the Current Status of United Nations Romanization Systems for Geographical Names was published at the Group's website at <http://www.eki.ee/wgrs/>. Romanization systems for each of the languages are available for download as pdf files.

Main changes that have been made since version 2.1 include the following:

1. Romanization system for Thai was updated according to Resolution VIII/13.

2. The term Serbo-Croatian Cyrillic was changed into Serbian Cyrillic according to Resolution VIII/14.

3. A new national provisional romanization system for Dzongkha of 1997 was introduced in the report, replacing the system of 1994.

4. Information on the proposed modifications to the UN recommended system of romanization for Arabic was included.

5. Details of the national provisional romanization system for Khmer (1995) were provided.

6. Information on the romanization of Burmese was updated and notes added to the table of abbreviated vowel characters. Note 5 was

rephrased, some other examples added.

7. References to new documents submitted to the Eighth UN Conference were included in the sections for Arabic and Korean.

The report has also been submitted to the Editorial Committee at the UNGEGN Working Group on Publicity and Funding, with a view to publishing it as a United Nations document, according to Resolution VIII/15.

### **Peeter Päll**

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## Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

The Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in Berlin in August-September, 2002, reinstated the working group on terminology in resolution No. 3. The *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names* has now been published and distributed to all participants of the 8th conference. The next task of the working group, according to resolution 11 of the 6th Conference and resolution 3 of the 8th Conference, will be to review and update the glossary

as required.

Members of the working group held a first meeting in Berlin on 2 September 2002; the minutes of this meeting are included below.

Any UNGEGN expert who would like to be (or remain) a member of the working group on terminology is invited to contact the convenor via e-mail or snail mail at his address below.

Furthermore, any suggestions for additions or deletions of terms or changes of definitions

in the present glossary should also be conveyed to the convenor, in English. They will then be incorporated in a report, to be discussed at the next meeting of the working group.

### **Prof. Naftali Kadmon**

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### **Report of the meeting of the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology**

Berlin, 2 September 2002, Foreign Ministry, Adenauer Hall, 14-15 hrs

Participating experts (in alphabetic order):

Mr. David Blair, Australia,  
Mr. Naftali Kadmon, Israel,  
Mme. Sylvie Lejeune, France ,  
Mr. Roger Payne, U.S.A.,  
Mr. Gerd Quinting, U.S.A.,

david.blair@mq.edu.au  
convenor, msnkadmo@mscc.huji.ac.il  
sylvie.lejeune@ign.fr  
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quinting@nima.mil

Convenor welcomed the experts present, and thanked them for their contribution to the production of the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names*, which, after more than ten years of work, has now been published as a six-language volume that, hopefully, will serve the worldwide work of

standardization. The subject of the present meeting is to consider point 2 of resolution VI/11, namely "to periodically review and update the new glossary".

Mr. Blair expressed his congratulations on the publication of the glossary, and supports the proposal for the

resolution recommending the continuation of the work of this working group.

Mr. Quinting expressed his opinion that the glossary is indeed a living document, and therefore requires follow-up work.

Mme. Lejeune mentioned that France had already prepared

and published a separate French edition based on the UNGEGN glossary, but extended so as to conform to special domestic requirements, as had already been done by Germany.

Mr. Payne raised the acute problem of the mechanism to be used for maintaining and updating the glossary, and whether this should be handled by the U.N. secretariat or by the convenor, and asked who would approve any changes. He recommended putting the glossary on the internet; non-Roman characters would have to be in a PDF file.

Mr. Blair raised the question of who would perform the translations into the different languages.

In the ensuing discussion it was suggested that the report of this meeting be distributed by the secretariat to the UNGEGN experts, and that any comments should be sent to the convenor. A new report would then be presented to the next meeting of the working group for discussion and/or approval. As to the matter of translation, the U.N.

secretariat should be asked to perform this task, with the help of volunteers from among UNGEGN experts, as in the past. However, in contrast to the present glossary with its 375 terms in 6 languages, any updating will presumably constitute a very much reduced work load. The updating cycle as well as the form of incorporating any new terms will be dealt with after an estimate of their number and extent will be available.

Convenor then presented the suggestions for amendments to the glossary already received, as follows:

M. Marc Richard (Canada), via WG member André Lapierre, proposed three sub-divisions of the term eponym (No. 79 in the glossary)

- “toponyme commémoratif”  
(commemorative toponym)
- “toponyme anecdotique”  
(anecdotic toponym)
- “toponyme recyclé”  
(recycled toponym).

The experts present did not consider this “splitting” of the

term to be necessary.

The Dutch-and German-Speaking Division (DGSD) in paper E/CONF.94/CRP.35 suggested “cross-boundary toponym”. Participants agreed to the inclusion of this concept either in the form proposed, or, preferably, as “trans-boundary toponym”.

It was noted that the DGSD proposed to the 8th Conference the establishment of a new working group on exonyms (The 8th Conference indeed established a working group on exonyms in resolution No. 4).

Two further terms were noted in names of papers presented at the 21st congress of ICOS (Uppsala, August 2002), without being accompanied by a definition, namely: “oikonym” and “anoikonym”. If suitable definitions will be received these terms might be considered by the working group.

Convenor thanked the participants present and closed the meeting at 15:00 hrs.

## Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

The original Working Group on Evaluation was established to address resolution 4 of the Fifth UN Conference in 1987. Reports of the Working Group were presented to UNGEGN at its 14th Session in 1989 (WP 31), at its 15th Session in 1991 (WP 55), and at its 16th Session in 1992 (WP 3). The Working Group was then disbanded in favour of a new working group to consider the particularly important aspects of publicity and funding.

However, as the work of evaluation of UNGEGN and the Conferences needs to be considered on a continual basis, the Working Group was re-established during the 20th Session of UNGEGN (2000). The first meeting of the Working Group was held, on August 30, 2002, during the Eighth UN Conference. The agenda of the meeting was adopted as drafted to address: determining priorities, action plan, publication, and funding.

### Current work plan

The work plan is under development, but includes an evaluation of the functioning

and efficacy of UNGEGN and the implementation of resolutions, finding ways to involve member states not currently participating in UNGEGN, and looking at the needs of developing countries to achieve national standardization of their geographical names.

### Future Working Group meeting

The Working Group is planning to hold a meeting between now and the next UNGEGN session, soon after completion of a review of the evaluation sheets that people filled in at the end of the Eighth Conference in Berlin.

Members who attended the meeting in August 2003:

- Ki-Suk Lee (Republic of Korea) - Convenor, leekisuk@plaza.snu.ac.kr
- Langa Mathenjwa (South Africa) - Rapporteur, lmathenj@pan.uzulu.ac.za
- Junji Yamazaki (Japan), junji.yamazaki@mofa.go.jp
- Hiroyuki Uchida (Japan), hiroyuki.uchida@mofa.go.jp

- Peter Raper (South Africa), lamoller@freemail.absa.co.za
- Lucie Möller (South Africa), lamoller@freemail.absa.co.za
- Luis Abrahamo (Mozambique), P.O. Box 288, Maputo, Mozambique, fax 258-421804
- Trueman Kubheka (South Africa), vt27@dacst.pwv.gov.za
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- Seichi Tanioka (Japan), tanioka@gsi.go.jp

### Ki-Suk Lee

*Convenor, Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation*

## From the Countries

### Germany

Report from the Federal Republic of Germany, host of the:

**Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) 27 August – 5 September 2002 and the Twenty-first Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) 26 August and 6 September 2002**

#### 1. The Conference

From 27 August to 5 September 2002 about 280 representatives from 88 countries took part in the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names – in conjunction with the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (26 August and 6 September 2002). It was held at the Conference Centre of the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin. The Federal Ministry of the Interior had transferred the responsibility for organizational and financial matters related to the preparation and implementation of the Conference to the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG).

The Conference was opened on Tuesday, 27 August 2002, by the Federal Minister of the Interior, Mr Otto Schily. The Conference elected H. E. Mr. Klaus-Henning Rosen, Ministry of the Interior, President of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the

Standardization of Geographical Names, by acclamation.

#### 2. Events within the Conference

During this Conference a number of important accompanying events were organized. Amongst others: a three-part Technical Exhibition, consisting of a Topical (scientific), a Country, and a Commercial Exhibition, a Training Course in Toponymy, technical excursions and social events. Access to the Technical Exhibition was given to experts and interested visitors (28 and 29 August 2002).

The "heart" of the exhibition, though, was the (scientific) Topical Exhibition placed by the organisers under the leitmotif of: "Preserving the past - linking to the future".

This vivid presentation of the following six topics sketched out important aspects of the overall issue in a graphically well-presented way: History and change of geographical names, - Multilingual areas, - Romanization systems, -

Exonyms, - Pronunciation, - Curiosities.

33 authors from 13 different countries made contributions to the items mentioned above. 40 panels and 5 PC presentations were elaborated (e.g. the Internet presentation of the ARD's pronunciation database [ARD = German Broadcasting Houses by State Law] or the Selected List of Exonyms of the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy, etc.). More than 20 assistants supported the authors of the exhibition with text- and map material or with research work.

Because of the positive reactions received it is planned to have this part also exhibited at the next International Cartographic Congress to be held in August 2003 in Durban, South Africa, as well as at the International Geographical Congress to be held in Glasgow, UK, in August 2004. In co-operation with the Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD) of the UNGEGN the contents of the Topical Exhibition has been made available on a CD-ROM. The CD entitled "Topical

Exhibition” may be requested from the Co-ordinator of the Technical Exhibition, Mr Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu (pier.zaccheddu@bkg.bund.de) in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

The Country Exhibition offered the possibility to participating countries to present their achievements in the field of geographical names and their standardization and new products on the subject. A presentation platform, consisting of PC, data projector and screen was installed at the exhibition venue (Europa-Saal) for 20 digital presentations. 45 panels, 12 tables and 13 display cases were made available as well.

34 of the 88 countries that sent delegates participated in the Country Exhibition by contributing

1. entries in the form of posters, atlases, gazetteers:

Norway, Greece, Iran, Latvia, Poland, Austria, Algeria, Japan, Sudan, Cyprus, Israel, China, New Zealand, France, Switzerland, Russia, Peru, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Germany, Romania, Sweden, USA, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;

2. digital presentations that were projected through the presentation platform:

Tanzania, Nepal, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Czech Republic, Madagascar, The Netherlands, Zambia, South Africa, Slovenia, Mongolia as well as France, Norway, Greece, Peru, USA, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Germany.

On this occasion, the organizer would like to point out that the

material displayed for this part of the exhibition did not necessarily imply endorsement and/or agreement by the United Nations and the host country of this conference.

The Working Committee of the Surveying Authorities of the States of the Federal Republic of Germany (AdV) made available prototypes for the ALK/ALKIS and ATKIS projects in connection with geographical names. The contribution of the AdV towards standardization, are homogenous basic documents and standards that serve for the construction and harmonization of the Authoritative Topographic-Cartographic Information System (ATKIS) with the Authoritative Real Estate Cadastre Information System (ALKIS) as basic module for Technical and Geo Information Systems. Although the Länder are autonomous regarding topographic surveys and map production, it could be shown, that digital terrain maps can be derived from ATKIS.

The Institute of Regional Geography of Leipzig compiled posters on the National Atlas of Germany.

In co-operation with the Saxonian Ministry of Culture the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG) organized a contest for students in secondary education in the Sorbian region. The theme for this contest was “Experienced bilingualism in Lusatia”. The winning entry was exhibited in the exhibition area.

The award for the winning entries was handed over to the students on Thursday, 29 August 2002.

Within the Commercial Exhibition the importance of geographical names in a digital environment has been demonstrated, by presenting, amongst others: - cartographic and GIS products related to geographical names, - the entry and retrieval of geographical names in data bases and delivery of names data using the Internet, - the automated selection and placement of geographical names on maps. With regard to multilingual data bases/sets exhibitors had been encouraged to present approaches of solutions/prototypes using the ISO 10646/Unicode text encoding standard.

The following companies participated in the Commercial Exhibition (27-29 August 2002): - ESRI Geoinformatik GmbH (Germany), - Westermann Schulatlas Verlag (Germany), - Technologiezentrum der Universität Bremen (TZI) (Germany), - Universal Postal Union (UPU) (Bern, Switzerland).

Furthermore, Technical Excursions were organized to the multilingual Sorbian region (31 August 2002), to the historical and cultural centre of Potsdam (1 September 2002) and to the Berlin State Library – Prussian Cultural Heritage (31 August 2002).

To round off the expert work at the Conference the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany organized

a Dinner Reception at the Reichstag Building on Wednesday 28 August 2002.

### **3 Training Course on Toponymy**

The United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) have observed for many years, that Developing Countries are in considerable need of expertise in topographic mapping, collection of geographical names in the field, developing and maintaining names data bases, in national, and in international standardization of geographical names.

The Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy of UNGEGN has initiated several such training courses in various countries. However, these courses were somewhat deficient in the component “international standardization”, because the participants of those courses did not have a chance to attend a United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names or a Session of UNGEGN. At these earlier Conferences and Sessions it had always been observed, that far too few conference participants had come from Developing Countries.

Therefore, the Seventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (1998) passed Resolution

VII/12, which recommends “to consider organizing ... training courses ... to adjoin meetings of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.”

This training course, held in Enschede, Frankfurt am Main, and Berlin, was organized and implemented in pursuance of that Resolution: course participants attended both the Eighth Conference and the Twenty-first Session of UNGEGN.

The course was attended by 20 participants from 17 Developing Countries. All their expenses in connection with the course were born jointly by the United Nations, The Netherlands, and Germany.

The first week of this course in Enschede encompassed the theoretical part. It took place there at the International Institute for Geo-Information and Earth Observation (ITC). Participants heard about and discussed subjects such as: the process of naming geographical features; national agencies for geographical names; international writing systems; script transformation systems, romanization; field collection systems; names in multilingual areas; exonyms; and the role of the United Nations when it comes to geographical names and their standardization.

The second week was devoted to a practical names collection exercise in a rural and wooded area north of Frankfurt am Main. Local newspapers of that

area informed about the names collection exercise. Small groups of participants accompanied by English and German speaking interpreters worked in ten different parts of that area. The groups had maps but the maps did not show any names. Local residents had to be questioned about the names and about the meaning and the history of these names. All information received in these interviews was recorded on work sheets.

Later in the office all that information collected in the field was entered into a digital data base provided by the software Microsoft ACCESS. The program allows to creation and printing of a names list, a gazetteer. From this data base names could be imported into the GIS-software ArcView. The German Authoritative Topographic Cartographic Information System (ATKIS) with its most accurate digital landscape model (Basis-DLM at 1:10.000) served as background layer. The collected names were visualized in this map according to their coordinates. Finally, individual sheets of this map were printed for each group with the placed names collected by this group.

During the third and the fourth week course participants attended the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin. Here they could acquaint themselves with the international efforts of names standardization. They

heard contributions from many other countries, participated in discussions and provided also themselves contributions about geographical names work in their own home countries.

They participated in a technical excursion by bus into a multilingual area.

After the course, we heard from some participants about their work back home and that all those course matters offered had been very useful and helpful to them. They work in their national names authority, or contribute in forming one, or

continue elsewhere with formal studies on the subject matter.

A full report of the training course is currently being prepared. It will be entitled:

DGSD Training Course on Toponymy, Enschede, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, 11 August – 6 September 2002, Mitteilungen des Bundesamtes fuer Kartographie und Geodäsie, Band XX.

It may later be obtained in the internet shop:

[www.bkg.bund.de/GI/Shop/index.html](http://www.bkg.bund.de/GI/Shop/index.html),

click: “Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen”,

click: “Mitteilungen des Bundesamtes fuer Kartographie und Geodäsie”.

Some Impressions and pictures of the Conference and the accompanying events are given on the following web page:

<http://www.bkg.bund.de/un-conference2002/geonames.htm>

### **Jörn Sievers**

*Chairman, Organizing Committee of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Eighth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names*

## Iran (Islamic Republic of)

In Iran, we are beginning new work about the standardization of geographical names. This task is carried out in the Iranian Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names. We have established five working groups in relation to standardization of geographical names. The names of these working groups are as mentioned below:

1. Working Group on transcription
2. Working Group on toponymy web site and geographical names database
3. Working Group on country names and exonyms
4. Working Group on historical names
5. Working Group on terminology of geographical names

Each group has a head of group with some assistants.

One of the major activities on geographical names in Iran is the holding of the first conference on geographical names. In addition, we will hold the second conference in May 2003 in the

National Cartographic Center and now we are collecting all articles about geographical names. Also we will hold the seventh regional meeting on geographical names in the Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic) in October 2003. We will invite participants from all countries in the division to attend the meeting.

Also we will establish a web site as soon as possible. At first, we will enter the main geographical names of Iran in the web site and afterwards we will link the geographical names database to web site.

In relation to the Working Group on historical names, five people are members of this working group and at first they study the historical names of major cities and towns and then they will concentrate their activities on all Iran's historical names, for both human and physical features.

We are sending some documents about the Working Group on transcription systems to the UNGEGN Working

Group on Romanization Systems. In our report, we describe all activities on Romanization systems in Iran. We will make a new structure for Romanization of geographical names in Iran. At the first step, we accept transcription method as major methods on IPA bases for the Romanization system in Iran. Then we begin to prepare a prescription for transcription system in Iran.

In addition, the Working Group on terminology of geographical names begins its work for collecting all terms in geographical names and interpretation and translation of terms.

The Working Group on exonyms and country names begin its actual work in April and at first will supply all country names for use in all documents and media and then begin collecting all exonyms in Iran.

### **Mehran Maghsoudi**

*Secretary of the Iranian Committee for Standardization of Geographical Names*

## Israel

### **Glossary of Toponymic Terminology finally produced**

The "Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names" was finally produced and distributed to all participants of the Eighth United Nations conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in Berlin in August-September 2002. Based on a proposal submitted by Israel to the U.N. Group of Experts on Geographical Names in 1989, the Third Conference in 1991 established a new working group on terminology with Prof. Naftali Kadmon as convenor and general editor of the new glossary. As a first and basic stage the editor submitted to the working group an English version, with 287 terms and their definitions, and examples in 16 scripts. These were discussed by the working group, whose members suggested amendments and added numerous terms. After finally having been confirmed by the Seventh Conference, the 375 terms with their definitions were translated into the remaining official languages of the United Nations,

namely French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic. These translations were performed voluntarily by members of UNGEGN. The U.N. Secretariat then added cross-referenced indexes as well as an introduction and finally had the glossary printed and bound as a 261-page multilingual volume in an attractive colour soft cover. It is hoped that this, the first printed book-type production of UNGEGN, will constitute a valuable contribution to toponymic education and in particular further the standardization of geographical names around the globe.

The glossary, which carries the ISBN number 92-1-061192-6, can be ordered from the United Nations Sales Section, New York or Geneva, as U.N. publication Sales No. M.01.XVII.7 at a price of US\$ XX.XX.

### **Textbook of Toponymy**

The first textbook dealing with all aspects of geographical names and their standardization,

"Toponymy – the Lore, Laws and Language of Geographical Names" by Prof. Naftali Kadmon, was distributed to all participants of the international training course in the standardization of geographical names held by the U.N. in the Netherlands and Germany in August 2002. The detailed table of contents of the 333-page volume was published in a previous UNGEGN Newsletter and can be obtained from the author at [msnkadmo@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:msnkadmo@mscc.huji.ac.il). The book (ISBN 0-533-13531-1) is available from the publishers, Vantage Press, Inc., at 516 E 34th Street, New York 10001, for US\$ 14.95 plus US\$ 2.40 overseas postage. For a detailed review see e.g. "Names", Journal of the American Names Society, vol. 50 No. 2, June 2002.

### **Prof. Naftali Kadmon**

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# Lithuania

## News from Lithuania ( 01-09-2002 - 01-03-2003 )

The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language of Lithuania functions as the Geographical Names Authority (<http://www.vlkk.lt>).

A consultative subcommittee has been set up to deal with geographical names; it comprises linguists and cartographers as well as representatives of various government agencies.

On 19 of December, 2002 – was established the Cartography Society of Lithuania (<http://www.k.c.gf.vu.lt>).

On 27 of February, 2003 - was held a meeting of the

Toponymic Section of the Cartography Society of Lithuania:

1. Ms Aiste Pangonyte (State Commission of the Lithuanian Language of the Lithuania – Geographical Names Authority). *The Basics toponymic works of State Commission of the Lithuanian Language*, 2002-2003.

2. Ms Danute Mardosiene (National Land Service of Lithuania). *Planned official mapping of Geographical Names in Lithuania 2003*.

3. Mr. Tomas Duksa (Mapping and Charting Division of National Land Service of Lithuania). *Project of Regulation “Usage of Geographical Names in published maps of Lithuania”*.

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# Sudan

## National Committee for Geographical Names

This paper is about our experience in Sudan. It is an example of establishing a geographical names committee and I hope all countries that have no geographical names committee will benefit from it, especially countries of UNGEGN's East Africa Division, for which I was elected (in Berlin) as Chairman.

The Committee may engage the assistance National Committee for Geographical Names Sudan Ministry of Environment and Physical Development. This committee is responsible for setting policies, programmes and plans for geographical names. It has a corporate personality and seal. Its headquarters are in Khartoum. It is under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Development.

### The formation of the Committee

The Committee was formed by a decision of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Development. It has 15 members and is presided over by a part-time national personality and representative of institutions concerned with geographical names. In addition it has a

number of persons with experience, knowledge and competence in geographical maps and languages. The General Secretary of the committee is one of them.

### Aims and purpose of the Committee

1. Setting a national standardized system for writing geographical names.
2. Issuing a national dictionary for geographical names.
3. Collecting and tracing the origins of geographical and historical names in Sudan and spreading geographical awareness in the country.
4. Participating in the preparation, editing, and amendment of an international dictionary of geographical names.

### Powers and functions of the Committee

1. Setting of general policies for geographical names and developing a system for their spelling to be implemented in Sudan.
2. Investigating geographical names and researching their origin, form, spelling, meaning, pronunciation and history.
3. Investigating cases where the spelling of geographical names is doubtful; determining the appropriateness and the correct spelling which should be followed in official maps and services.

4. Collecting and adopting a fundamental list of geographical names in Sudan.
5. Omission, change, or replacement of the name of any geographical place in maps, official documents, or otherwise.
6. Forming any sub-committees or specialized committees the Committee deems necessary for the execution of its work.
7. Unifying the geographic terminology at the national level in Sudan.

### Guidelines for the Committee

1. Giving preference to the original names while avoiding repetition.
2. Avoiding the use of names of living persons except in rare and extraordinary circumstances.
3. Encouraging the use of suitable descriptive terms; giving preference to long-standing terms.
4. Giving terms to Arabic terms descriptive of the place and avoiding offensive names.
5. Giving priority to the execution of the tasks of the Committee over other governmental, private organizational, or other entities.

### The General Secretariat

The Committee shall have a General Secretariat in accordance with the structure approved within the organizational structure of the Ministry wide decision No. 96 (1997) as follows:

- a) The General Secretary;
- b) Secretary of Specialized Committees;
- c) Secretary of Academic Coordination;
- d) The Committee Secretaries;
- e) Studies and Computer Research Coordinator;
- f) Documentation and Libraries Coordinator;
- g) Manager, Financial and Administrative Affairs.

### **Budget of the Committee**

The budget of the Committee shall be constituted as follows:

- a) Funds provided by the general budget;
- b) Grants, aid, and assistance received from organizations and

institutions inside and outside the Sudan;

- c) Any other legitimate sources;
- d) The budget of the Committee shall be disposed of in accordance with the prevailing accounting principles of the State.

### **Regulations**

The Committee shall issue, upon approval of the supervising Minister, the regulations required for the execution of the provisions of this decision. The regulations may provide for the following:

- a) Regulation of the work and meetings of the Committee and the General Secretariat;

- b) Determination of the powers and functions of the chairman and the general secretary;
- c) Determination of the authorities and tasks of sub-committees;
- d) Organization of financial and administrative affairs.

The Ministry of Environment and Physical Development and the other concerned bodies shall take action to execute this decision.

### **Eng. Nasr Ibrahim Hassanain**

*General Secretary*

*National Committee for Geographical*

*Names*

*Khartoum, Sudan*

## **Other Geographical Names activities**

### **1. UN Toponymy Course in Khartoum**

The Sudan National Committee for Geographical Names welcomed the experts Professor Ferjan Ormeling of the Netherlands and Dr. Andreas Illert of Germany for a UN Course on Toponymy in Khartoum from 28 January to 5 February 2003. The Committee was particularly grateful to the United Nations for having made it possible for these two experts to come to Khartoum. More than 40 participants, women and men, from Southern and Northern Sudan completed the course. Contributions to the course were made by Professor Yousef Al-Khalifa Abu Bakr, Professor Al-Amin Abu-Manga and Professor Herman Bell. The course was organized by Engineer Nasr Ibrahim

Hassanain, General Secretary of the Sudan National Committee, with support from the Sudanese Government, especially from the Ministry of Environment and Physical Development.

Participants in the course were able to conduct fieldwork and to observe how the results could be processed by computer for presentation in the form of a gazetteer. They were also able to consider the newly modified Beirut system for the romanization of Arabic geographical names discussed in 2002 at the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and the Twenty-first Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, held in Berlin.

### **2. Cultural Toponymy**

Lively discussions in the Sudanese media and universities have taken place on the cultural implications of a geographical name. 'Kowwa' on the bank of the River Nile opposite Dunqula al-Urdi in northern Sudan has been plausibly claimed to be derived from the ancient name Gem-Aten, which appeared in Egyptian hieroglyphs more than 33 centuries ago. A presentation was given at the University of Khartoum with the following title: 'The Discovery of Monotheism' in Nubia. The Name of an Ancient Site and its Interpretations.

### **Herman Bell**

*Consultant*

*Exeter University, United Kingdom*

# United States of America

## US BGN International Activities

The fourteenth course on geographical names (applied toponymy) offered under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History was held in San Salvador, El Salvador, 7 –16 August 2002. The course was highly successful for 16 students from El Salvador, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala. Students attended lectures regarding the need and procedures for standardizing geographical names and methods of processing and establishing such a program. There was also an intensive field exercise and a workshop on automation, which included all aspects of database design and operation.

There was a delegation of five from the United States to the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin, 27 August – 5 September 2002. Members of the delegation participated in the various activities and sessions of the conference including plenary, as well as committees and working groups on Training, Gazetteers and Data Exchange,

Romanization, Country Names, and Terminology.

The Executive Secretary of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) of the United States attended the Annual Conference of the Geographical Names Board of Canada where an informal meeting of the Canada/U.S. Division was held. Topics of mutual interest were discussed especially matters regarding transboundary names and also those relating to automation.

The BGN hosted the biennial meeting with the British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names. Numerous topics of mutual interest were examined and discussed.

Since the last newsletter, the staff and members of the Undersea Features Advisory Committee have processed numerous requests for names intended for use by the U.S. government based upon discoveries and a need for names for increased charting activities in the world's oceans.

The staff and members of the Board's Advisory Committee on

Antarctic Names has processed over 150 names needed for application on large-scale maps being produced for U.S. usage.

## US BGN Domestic Names Committee Activities

The Domestic Names Committee (DNC) of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names meets monthly, and has rendered decisions on 79 newly proposed names and adjudicated 123 controversial names and issues since our last report. The DNC staff responded to more than 8,500 inquiries of which approximately 75 percent were by e-mail. The DNC members and staff hosted the 2002 Annual Conference of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held in Baltimore, Maryland, 23- 27 July 2002, the first ever on the East Coast of the United States. The conference was a success and was well attended by almost 100 registrants and 21 State delegates. Other attendees included representatives of the Canadian Geographical Names Board, where an informal meeting of the U.S./Canada Division was held.

The conference included an array of papers on various toponymic themes as well as the regular event known as the State/Federal Roundtable where officials from local and State governments, and the Federal Government address issues of policy and procedures. The DNC of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names held its regular, monthly meeting. There were also two workshops; The National Map of the United States, and GNIS Maintenance for Federal Agencies. The next annual conference of COGNA will be held 29 September – 4 October 2003 in Monterey, California.

The National Geographic Names Data Compilation program is very active with extensive compilation underway in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Texas. Additional activity includes working with the Hawaii State Board on Geographic Names establishing the proper form of indigenous names in that State, and more than 1,000 names from the Hawaiian language have been

corrected to show the appropriate writing marks in accordance with today's accepted, standard orthography.

The official website for geographic names in the U.S. <<http://geonames.usgs.gov>> continues to be popular with more than 25,000 accesses per day, and numerous digital State gazetteers are downloaded daily. The U.S. Antarctica Geographic Names Database may also be accessed at the domestic site, and there is a link to the official undersea features names and foreign names site. The web-based software for maintaining the domestic names database allows Federal and now State agencies to participate in maintenance of the database. The DNC staff provided training in use of the GNIS Federal Maintenance Program to selected personnel of the National Park Service, Bureau of Land management, U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey, principal Federal agencies in maintaining GNIS. The maintenance program is fully operational, and the Geographic Names Office has entered into an agreement with the State of Florida whereby a

consortium of Federal, State, and local agencies will provide data and geometry of features to a State digital gazetteer and the Federal Geographic Names Information System. This effort is being used as a model for other States regarding geographic names collection and maintenance. The Geographic Names Office at the U.S. Geological Survey is a participant in *The National Map*, which is designed to provide digital maps that are readily available and current. Geographic names is one of eight data layers in this project. The maintenance and data compilation program continues with more than 75,000 new entries added to the database in the past six months.

The disc product of the domestic names database is the LANDVIEW V product in DVD format, which contains the entire GNIS database fully searchable in a text mode as well as providing a spatial, mapping capability.

**Roger L. Payne,**  
*Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on  
Geographic Names*

## Forthcoming Meetings

### **The 16<sup>th</sup> United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP), Okinawa, Japan, 14-18 July 2003**

The Sixteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic for Asia and the Pacific and the Ninth Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific will be held in Okinawa, Japan, from 14-18 July 2003 in accordance with the Economic and Social Council Decision 2000/229 of 23 July 2002.

The Conference will focus on the contributions of surveying, mapping and geographic information in support of implementation of Agenda 21. The primary objective of the Conference is to provide a regional forum where government officials, planners, scientists and experts from Asia

and the Pacific and other regions could meet to address the common needs, problems and experiences in the field of surveying and mapping, cartography, hydrography, remote sensing, land and geographical information systems, including educational and training aspects, scientific and technological requirements, implementation issues and benefits.

The Letter of Invitation "Note Verbale" for this Conference was sent to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations on 31 October 2002, and a reminder has followed on 27 March 2003. The Provisional

Agenda for the Conference (document E/CONF.95/1) and Note on Documentation for the Conference (document E/CONF.95/INF.1) were enclosed.

For further information, you can contact Ms Jennifer Javier or Mr. Amor Laaribi at the following address:

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### **The 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), 2004.**

At the meeting of the Economic and Social Council in July 2003, approval will be sought to hold the next Conference (2007) and the next UNGEGN session (2004). However, as conference room space must be reserved, tentative arrangements are already being made with the

Conference facilities at United Nations Headquarters in New York to hold the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of UNGEGN in 2004. The dates proposed cover the eight working days between April 20 and April 29, 2004.

When ECOSOC has met and the conference reservation

schedule has been drawn up, we will post information on the UNGEGN website to confirm arrangements for the 2004 session.

Once the dates are confirmed, the Note Verbale will be distributed in the usual way.

