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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names**
2019 session

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Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Reports: Governments on the situation in their countries
and on the progress made in the standardization of
geographical names****Report of Canada****Summary****

Since 2014, the activities of the Canadian national coordinating body for place names, the Geographical Names Board of Canada, have been guided by a five-year strategic plan that sets shared objectives for the country's federal, provincial and territorial naming authorities. The strategic plan includes several priorities: enhanced governance; improved functionality and interoperability of the national geographical names database; improved indigenous naming policies and partnerships; a renewed national policy for undersea and maritime feature naming; and increased awareness of the importance of authoritative geographical names.

Recent Board initiatives and activities aligned with the strategic plan include :

- A review of the approval status codes for geographical names in the national database (official, rescinded, changed, dual name, etc.). The review supports the interoperability of the database, and makes it easier for naming jurisdictions to assign clear, concise and standardized status codes to geographical names.
- A study to examine approaches to indigenous- and minority-language geographical naming in other international jurisdictions. The intent of the research was to document, analyse and summarize the policies and procedures used by a selection of national and subnational naming authorities to officially preserve and protect the language, culture and history of indigenous and/or minority place names.

* [GEGN.2/2019/1](#).

** The full report was prepared by Steve Westley, Geographical Names Board of Canada Secretariat, Natural Resources Canada. The report will be available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/1st_session_UNGEGN.html, in the language of submission only, as document [GEGN.2/2019/72/CRP.72](#).



- The inauguration of Geographical Names Day in November 2018 to raise awareness of the importance of authoritative geographical names and of the activities of the Board. The Board also released Canada’s Commemorative Map, an interactive online presentation of text, images and videos that highlights commemorative geographical names in Canada.
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