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

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Reports: Divisions of the Group of Experts

Report of the Asia South-East Division

Submitted by Asia South East Division **

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** Prepared by Asia South-East Division

Summary

The full report contains an outline of the main activities conducted by the Asia South-East Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names in 2019 and 2020. During that period, the Division held its seventh and eighth meetings.

The Division held its seventh meeting at United Nations Headquarters on 1 May 2019 as a side event to the 2019 session of the Group of Experts. The delegates of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Singapore and Thailand participated in the meeting. The attending member countries adopted the Division's workplan for the period 2019–2022, which had been proposed by the Division's Chair. The workplan consists of the following main activities:

1. Regional database and gazetteer standards;
2. Meeting of the Asia South-East Division;
3. Regional Map of the members of the Asia South-East Division; and
4. Generic terms.

The original plan was to hold the eighth divisional meeting face to face in July 2020, in conjunction with the international seminar and training on toponyms. However, owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, many countries have imposed travel restrictions, which has forced the Division's secretariat to move the meeting online. The seminar and training have been postponed to the second quarter of 2021

On 27 October 2020, the eighth divisional meeting was held online. It was attended by the delegates of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore and Viet Nam. A representative of the Secretariat, based in New York, also attended the meeting.

Following up on the resolutions adopted at the seventh divisional meeting, the Chair conveyed the progress made in implementing the workplan, which included the transformation of the Division's website into a collaborative platform. The Secretariat also took the opportunity to encourage each Division member country to review the draft strategic plan and programme of work of the Group of Experts.

Eight resolutions adopted at the eighth meeting were related to progress and activities under the workplan of the Division's member countries, including the draft strategic plan and programme of work of the Group of Experts.

The resolutions adopted at the seventh and eighth meetings of the Division, including the actions taken to advance the workplan, are detailed in the full report.

Divisional Activities

a. Chairmanship

Indonesia was selected as the Chair of the UNGEGN ASE Division during the 6th Divisional Meeting held in Manila, Philippines on 26 March 2018. The Chairmanship shall be for a period of four years, from April 2018 to April 2022.

b. Divisional Meeting

The 7th Divisional Meeting

The 7th Divisional Meeting UNGEGN ASE Division was held as a side event during the 1st Session of UNGEGN in UN Headquarters - New York, on 1 May 2019. Delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Singapore, and Thailand participated in the meeting.

In the 7th Divisional Meeting resolution, the attending members agreed to adopt the proposed UNGEGN ASE Division Work Plan 2019-2022. Details of the work plan available on website: http://asedivision-ungegn.org/ungegn_ase/index.php/ASED_Workplan_2019_2022. The minutes of the 7th Divisional Meeting are also available on UNGEGN ASE Division website: http://asedivision-ungegn.org/ungegn_ase/index.php/7th_Meeting.

The 8th Divisional Meeting

According to the UNGEGN ASE Division Work Plan 2019-2022, the 8th Divisional Meeting UNGEGN ASE Division was planned to be held in conjunction with the International Seminar and Training on Toponyms in Indonesia. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak's impact, the 8th Divisional Meeting UNGEGN ASE Division was held as a virtual meeting on 27 October 2020 hosted by Indonesia. Delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam, and representatives of UNGEGN Secretariat in New York participated in the meeting.

UNGEKN ASE Division Secretariat has re-arranged plans for International Seminar and Training on Toponyms. This decision was made after careful consideration and discussion with the UNGEGN Secretariat (Ms. Cecile Blake), UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses (Mr. Peder Gammeltoft), and the ASE Division Member Countries.

In the 8th Divisional Meeting resolution, the members agreed to follow up the UNGEGN ASE Division Work Plan 2019-2022. UNGEGN ASE Division Member Countries are affirming the importance of sharing geographical names. In the meeting, the ASE Division Member Countries were encouraged to participate in the consultation exercise of the preparation of the draft of the UNGEGN Strategic Plan and the Programme of Work. Detailed of the 8th Divisional Meeting, accessible on http://asedivision-ungegn.org/ungegn_ase/index.php/8th_Meeting

Progress of UNGEGN ASE Division Work Plan 2019-2022

i. Regional Database and Gazetteer Standards

UNGEKN ASE Division Secretariat will facilitate UNGEGN ASE Division Member Countries a collaborative platform to check and verify their country database and gazetteer as published in the upcoming regional database and gazetteer. To complete and improve the data, the ASE Division Member Countries may communicate with the UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat through email to nna-ina@big.go.id

ii. UNGEGN ASE Divisional Meeting

The 7th Divisional Meeting UNGEGN ASE Division was successfully held in UN Headquarters - New York, on 1 May 2019, while the 8th Divisional Meeting was held virtually on 27 October 2020 hosted by Indonesia.

The next meeting is planned to be hosted by Indonesia in conjunction with the International Training and Seminar on Toponymy in Bali in 2021. Due to COVID-19's current situation, UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat postponed the training and seminar after recent communication with the UNGEGN Secretariat (Ms. Cecilie Blake) in January 2021. The 9th Divisional Meeting UNGEGN ASE Division will be held as a virtual meeting in the last quarter of 2021.

iii. Regional Map of ASE Division Members

UNGEKN ASE Division Secretariat has prepared a draft version of a regional map comprising major island names, geographical names, and administrative boundaries to the provincial level. The primary data source is derived from the previous regional map (UNGEKN Asia South-East and Pacific South-West Division map). The draft was presented and discussed in the 8th Divisional Meeting and obtained feedbacks from the attending ASE Division Member Countries.

To expedite the completion of the regional map, the UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat encouraged UNGEGN ASE Division Member Countries to submit the required data. The meeting agreed that no updated regional map should be published until all ASE Division Member Countries have approved it.

The root of languages in the region will be prepared into a separate map and renamed to "estimated language distribution," as suggested by the Indonesian linguistic expert, Prof. Multamia Lauder. Furthermore, the ASE Division Member Countries are encouraged to collaborate in creating the Estimated Distribution Language Map and communicate with UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat through email to nna-ina@big.go.id

iv. Generic Terms

Since 2016, UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat has been strongly encouraging the ASE Division Member Countries to complete the generic terms by email or to provide the ASE Division Member Countries with a printed version form during the meeting to be fulfilled. The present glossary of Generic Terms of the Division has been filled by five countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines. The UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat requested other countries to complete their Generic Terms as well.

Conclusion

UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat continues to take essential actions to make progress of the UNGEGN ASE Division Work Plan, as follow:

1. UNGEGN ASE Division has begun to develop a division website through a collaborative platform to support regional data sharing to update and maintain the regional map and gazetteer;
2. UNGEGN ASE Division will follow up an intensive discussion and maintain communication with ASE Division Member Countries to complete and improve the regional database, gazetteer standard, and generic terms;
3. UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat will convene the “Webinar on the Local Language in the ASE Division” to support the Estimated Distribution Language Map's creation. ASE Division Secretariat will inform the UNGEGN Secretariat to invite other Divisions to join the event;
4. Due to the recent COVID-19 situation, the 9th Divisional Meeting UNGEGN ASE Division will be held as a virtual meeting. UNGEGN ASE Division will follow up with detailed information, including the meeting agenda;
5. Regarding the plan of the International Training and Seminar on Toponymy, UNGEGN ASE Division Secretariat will announce a verdict immediately after carefully considering the latest situation of pandemic COVID-19.

The group of experts is invited to express its view on the report of the UNGEGN ASE Division.