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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names****2023 session**

New York, 1–5 May 2023

Item 2 (a) of the provisional agenda

Organizational matters: adoption of the agenda**Annotated provisional agenda**

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 - (b) Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors for international use.
7. Social and economic benefits, supporting sustainable development, measures taken and proposed for the implementation of resolutions.



8. Monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan and programme of work 2021–2029, and of the work of the Group of Experts.
9. Issues of publicity for the Group of Experts and funding of Group projects.
10. Toponymic education.
11. Toponymic terminology.
12. Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity, including Indigenous, minority and regional languages and multilingual issues.
13. Exonyms.
14. Geographical names data management.
15. Writing systems and pronunciation.
16. Other geographical names issues.
17. Presentation and adoption of decisions.
18. Adoption of the report on the 2023 session.
19. Arrangements for the 2025 session of the Group of Experts.
20. Election of officers for the subsequent session.
21. Other business.
22. Closing of the session.

Annotations

1. Opening of the session

The provisional programme for the opening meeting will include an opening address by the Chair of the session, who will inform the Group of Experts of the activities of the Bureau during the intersessional period and provide the vision for the 2023 session. The address will be followed by welcome remarks by the Assistant Secretary-General, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat. Additional speakers may be added to the programme for the opening meeting.

2. Organizational matters

(a) Adoption of the agenda

On 12 May 2021, the Group of Experts approved the provisional agenda of the 2023 session ([GEGN.2/2023/1](#)) under silence procedure, pursuant to Council decision 2021/213.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda ([GEGN.2/2023/1/Rev.1](#))

(b) Organization of work

The proposed organization of work and times for the 2023 session of the Group of Experts was prepared pursuant to relevant decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Bureau of the Group of Experts to facilitate the consideration of agenda items within the time and services allocated to the Group. The proposed organization of work and documents of the session will continue to be updated in the course of the preparations for the session.

Documentation

Organization of work ([GEGN.2/2023/2](#))

3. Reports of the Chair and the Secretariat

The Chair of the Bureau and the representative of the Statistics Division will present reports on the activities undertaken during the intersessional period in accordance with decisions and resolutions, future plans and priorities of the Group of Experts.

Documentation

Rapport du Président: Vers une meilleure intégration au sein des Nations Unies ([GEGN.2/2023/3](#))

Report of the Secretariat ([GEGN.2/2023/4/CRP.4](#))

4. Reports**(a) Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names**

The Group of Experts will have before it, for information, reports submitted by Member States. The reports contain information on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names. The Chair or his designate may present a summary report on the agenda item and may also request that the reports of Member States be brought forward for discussion should there be a matter of topical interest with regard to standardization, such as name changes, multiple naming and challenges to and solutions for the standardization of names.

Documentation

National reports are available from the following countries:¹

Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Moldova, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Poland, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

(b) Divisions of the Group of Experts

In accordance with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names strategic plan and programme of work, 2021–2029, adopted by the Group of Experts at its 2021 session, and recommendation 1 and decisions 2/2021/3 and 2/2021/5, also adopted at the 2021 session (see [E/2021/69](#)), the Group will have before it, for discussion and adoption, the report on division Chairs and their responsibilities. The Group will also have before it, for information, the reports submitted by its geographical and linguistic divisions. The Chair may request that a divisional report be brought forward for discussion should there be a matter relating to its work or its structure and the creation or dissolution of a division.

Documentation

Report of the Arabic Division achievements, 2021–2022 ([GEGN.2/2023/6/CRP.6](#))

Report of the Portuguese-speaking Division ([GEGN.2/2023/9/CRP.9](#))

¹ Available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/3rd_session_2023/.

Rapport de la Division Afrique centrale (GEGN.2/2023/15/CRP.15)

Rapport du Cameroun (GEGN.2/2023/16/CRP.16)

Actividades realizadas durante el periodo intersesional por México como presidente de la División de América Latina (GEGN.2/2023/20/CRP.20)

Report of the Norden Division (GEGN.2/2023/55/CRP.55)

Report of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division (GEGN.2/2023/58/CRP.58)

Report of the Baltic Division (GEGN.2/2023/67/CRP.67)

Report of the Romano-Hellenic Division (GEGN.2/2023/72/CRP.72)

Publication and archiving of information on the geographical and linguistic divisions of the Group of Experts on the Group's website (GEGN.2/2023/77/CRP.77)

Report of the United States of America-Canada Division (GEGN.2/2023/80/CRP.80)

(c) Activities on the standardization of geographical names in Africa

At its twenty-second session, held in 2004, the Group of Experts established the Task Team for Africa, to encourage and strengthen the standardization of geographical names across the continent. As at the deadline for the submission of full reports and technical papers (see [GEGN.2/2023/INF/1](#)) no papers had been received under the agenda item.

To facilitate needed discussion under the agenda item, the status, issues and work on geographical names standardization highlighted in the national reports submitted by Member States and geographical and linguistic divisions within the African continent will be addressed.

(d) National and international meetings and conferences

In accordance with resolution II/19 of the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Conference recommended that each division prepare a programme of meetings to be submitted to the United Nations. As at the deadline for the submission of full reports and technical papers (see [GEGN.2/2023/INF/1](#)), no papers had been received under the agenda item.

The Group of Experts will have before it, for information and discussion, reports from Member States and from the divisions, working groups and liaison bodies of the Group of Experts, detailing the convening and outputs of meetings, conferences, symposiums and workshops held in support of sharing knowledge, experiences and thoughts on the standardization of geographical names.

5. Cooperation and liaison with other organizations

(a) International organizations

In accordance with resolution II/33 of the Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names and section III (h) of its guiding principles, the Group of Experts has established and maintained liaison with scientific and academic international organizations such as the International Cartographic Association; and Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization. The appointed liaison officers of the Group will report on their interaction since 2021 with those international groups and with the following: Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, and International Cartographic Association-International Geographical Union. The Group will open discussions for suggested improvements in cooperation and liaison activity with those groups.

Discussions may also be held on liaison activity with other international groups. Possibilities for the Group to establish formal cooperation with additional international groups will be discussed, as necessary.

Documentation

Report of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (GEGN.2/2023/26/CRP.26)

Report of the Joint International Cartographic Association/International Geographical Union Commission on Toponymy (GEGN.2/2023/36/CRP.36)

(b) Economic Commission for Africa

As at the deadline for the submission of full reports and technical papers (see [GEGN.2/2023/INF/1](#)), no papers had been received under the agenda item.

(c) Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

Pursuant to Council resolution [2018/2](#), in which the Council reaffirmed the need to strengthen the joint work between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, the Group has been endeavouring to build effective and streamlined relations with the Committee of Experts, through collaborative efforts such as joint meetings and participation across working groups. The Group will have before it the report of the Committee of Experts outlining the activities conducted during the intersessional period and future plans to enhance collaborative efforts.

Documentation

Report of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (GEGN.2/2023/51/CRP.51)

6. National and international standardization of geographical names

(a) Names collection, office treatment, national authorities, features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation

Presentations and discussion will focus on best practices, new approaches, problems faced and possible solutions with regard to achieving national standardization of geographical names. The topic is broad in scope and includes: methods of names collection (field collection, archival sourcing, crowdsourcing, postal surveys, submissions from the general public, etc.); treatment of names in the office (approaches to resolving duplication, name changes, merging of administrative units, commemorative naming, multiple naming and diverse languages and populations, street naming, etc.); legislation, policies and guidelines for names authorities (laws, board structures, principles, programme planning, extent of mandates, relationships of various naming bodies, etc.); names for particular purposes (hydrology, mountain areas, etc.) or standardization requirements of particular user groups (education, emergency operations, different levels of government, etc.). In addition, names of features beyond a single sovereignty are included, as well as items relating to international cooperation on geographical names standardization.

Documentation

Austrian map 1:50,000-UTM (ÖK50) (GEGN.2/2023/37/CRP.37)

Strengthening relationships in geographical names standardization through collaboration with mapping communities and non-governmental organizations in Indonesia (GEGN.2/2023/41/CRP.41)

Geographical names within the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf: the role of the coastal State (GEGN.2/2023/49/CRP.49)

Naming process of the new administrative area in Papua Region, Indonesia (GEGN.2/2023/50/CRP.50)

(b) Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors for international use

In accordance with resolution IV/4 of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Conference recommended that countries should be encouraged to publish and keep up-to-date toponymic guidelines for map and other editors. The Group of Experts will have before it reports prepared by the Coordinator for Toponymic Guidelines and Member States, which serve to outline the status of updated and new toponymic guidelines and to describe efforts to disseminate the guidelines and make them available.

Documentation

Update of toponymic guidelines: Finland ([GEGN.2/2023/52](#))

Report of the Coordinator for toponymic guidelines (GEGN.2/2023/61/CRP.61)

7. Social and economic benefits, supporting sustainable development, measures taken and proposed for the implementation of resolutions

The Group of Experts will address the implementation of tasks assigned pursuant to the resolutions adopted by the former United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names and by the recommendations and decisions of the current Group of Experts on Geographical Names. Under the agenda item, presentations and discussions will focus on measures to implement the resolutions, as well as experiences in implementing them, within the context of the Group of Experts or at the country level. The discussions on implementing the resolutions and recommendations are expected to lead to further developments by creating social and economic benefits and supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Discussion will also be held with regard to the functioning and efficacy of the Group, including to look at the need for developing countries to achieve national standardization of their geographical names and to increase the effectiveness of meetings and subsidiary bodies of the Group.

Documentation

Adoption d'une politique sur les changements de noms de lieux (GEGN.2/2023/23/CRP.23)

Prévenir et traiter les critiques envers des noms de lieux (GEGN.2/2023/29/CRP.29)

Civil lawsuit case arising from a lack of citizen participation in geographical naming and renaming of features (GEGN.2/2023/43/CRP.43)

Toponym usage in response to the earthquake disaster in Cianjur Regency (GEGN.2/2023/44/CRP.44)

Treatment of different geographical names proposed for port naming (GEGN.2/2023/46/CRP.46)

Report of the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation (GEGN.2/2023/87/CRP.87)

Activating place names in digital geospatial services to support the goals of sustainable development (GEGN.2/2023/94/CRP.94)

Using standardized the geospatial names platform as a driver for enhanced monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (GEGN.2/2023/101/CRP.101)

8. Monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan and programme of work 2021–2029, and of the work of the Group of Experts

The objectives of the strategic plan are to guide the work of the Expert Group, provide a forward and focused vision, direct the prioritization of activities, allow for more effective communication within the Group and across its stakeholders, strengthen the Group's accountability and deepen the impact of its work. Under the agenda item, the Group will examine the work undertaken during the intersessional period to implement the strategic plan and programme of work, discuss the progress made and decide on future actions. The Group is invited to adopt the report on the strategic plan and programme of work and to provide guidance on future areas of work.

Documentation

Implementation of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names strategic plan and programme of work for 2021–2029, during the period 2021–2023 (GEGN.2/2023/22/CRP.22)

Report of New Zealand on activities aligned with the strategic plan and programme of work, 2021–2029, of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (GEGN.2/2023/33/CRP.33)

9. Issues of publicity for the Group of Experts and funding of Group projects

The Group of Experts will have before it, for information, the report prepared by the Working Group on Publicity and Funding, in which it outlines the aims and activities of the Working Group in raising awareness of the need for geographical names standardization and in advancing the digital presence of Group of Experts on the web and social media and through the Group of Experts media kit. In its report, the Working Group also highlights efforts to find financial support for toponymic training, to establish national geographical names authorities and to allow for representatives from developing countries to attend sessions of the Group of Experts. The report is intended to facilitate the exchange of information within the Group of Experts.

Documentation

Report on the activities of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding (GEGN.2/2023/13/CRP.13)

Report of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy (GEGN.2/2023/14/CRP.14)

10. Toponymic education

The Group of Experts will have before it the report prepared by the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy, in which it describes ongoing work with coordination of and assistance related to toponymy training courses organized by a host country or the relevant division of the Group of Experts. The papers presented are intended to facilitate the exchange of information on capacity development methodologies and approaches by Member States.

Documentation

Transferencia de conocimientos técnicos y asesorías a la República Dominicana y Santa Lucía sobre interoperabilidad, la estandarización de nombres geográficos y gestión de nomenclator (GEGN.2/2023/21/CRP.21)

Strengthening toponymic capacity-building in Indonesia (GEGN.2/2023/45/CRP.45)

Dissemination and promotion of Indigenous place names (GEGN.2/2023/84/CRP.84)

11. Toponymic terminology

The Working Group on Toponymic Terminology was formed in 1989. It is responsible for preparing a glossary of toponymic terminology, reviewing updates to the glossary and establishing a functioning terminology database. There have been several editions of the *Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names*, the most recent of which was issued in 2002. At the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in New York in 2007, an addendum to the *Glossary* was approved.

The Group of Experts will have before it the report of the Working Group. In its report, the Working Group highlights its work in reviewing updates to the toponymic terminology glossary and establishing a functioning terminology database. The Group of Experts will also have before it relevant reports prepared by experts from across the divisions of the Group of Experts. The Group of Experts is invited to adopt the report of the Working Group and to provide guidance on the next phase of its work.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on Toponymic Terminology 2021–2023 (GEGN.2/2023/31/CRP.31)

Anthology of geographical terms for natural and human features in Saudi Arabia (GEGN.2/2023/88/CRP.88)

12. Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity, including Indigenous, minority and regional languages and multilingual issues

The Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage was established in response to resolution VIII/1 of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in Berlin in 2002. It was formerly known as the Working Group on the Promotion of Indigenous and Minority Group Place Names.

The aim of the Working Group is to oversee activities relating to the promotion of Indigenous and minority geographical names to pursue the retention/revitalization of minority and Indigenous group culture. The Working Group serves to bring a focus to the relationship between place names and cultural heritage and to assist countries in developing appropriate processes to ensure that the relationship is maintained. The Group of Experts will also have before it relevant reports prepared by experts from across the divisions of the Group of Experts related to the topic. The Group of Experts is invited to provide guidance on the operations and work programme of the Working Group.

Documentation

Des cartes interactives qui mettent en valeur le patrimoine toponymique du Québec (GEGN.2/2023/24/CRP.24)

Report of New Zealand on new maps showing traditional/customary/ancestral/original Māori names (GEGN.2/2023/34/CRP.34)

Bilingual municipal maps in the Austrian federal province Carinthia (GEGN.2/2023/38/CRP.38)

Minority place-name standardization: a comparison of regulations and approaches in Europe (GEGN.2/2023/39/CRP.39)

Draft *Best Practices for Indigenous Geographical Names of Canada* (GEGN.2/2023/81/CRP.81)

Focus group on Indigenous and minority language geographical names (GEGN.2/2023/82/CRP.82)

Addressing derogatory geographical names in Canada (GEGN.2/2023/83/CRP.83)

Geographic names and world heritage sites in Saudi Arabia (GEGN.2/2023/102/CRP.102)

13. Exonyms

The Working Group on Exonyms was formed in 2002, pursuant to resolution VIII/4 of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. The Group of Experts will have before it papers submitted by experts detailing the current trends in exonym use (pursuant to resolution III/18 of the Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names). The Working Group will also present to the Group of Experts, for discussion, the draft decision on the use and safeguarding of exonyms. The Group of Experts is invited to review and provide feedback on the draft decision and guidance on the future work of the Working Group.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on Exonyms (GEGN.2/2023/7/CRP.7)

Proposal for a decision on the use and safeguarding of exonyms (GEGN.2/2023/8/CRP.8)

The endonym/exonym divide as a core topic of critical toponomastics (GEGN.2/2023/40/CRP.40)

Standardization of common exonyms: reconciling reduction and promotion (GEGN.2/2023/62/CRP.62)

List of English names of major geographical features situated in the territory of Poland (GEGN.2/2023/69/CRP.69)

Divisions territoriales des pays du monde (GEGN.2/2023/89/CRP.89)

14. Geographical names data management

Under the agenda item, the following will be addressed: issues related to the structure and content of toponymic data files and the creation, maintenance and output of databases and gazetteers. The focus may be on technical topics, such as data collection supported by information technology, data categorization and data modelling and database (web) applications, and more strategic topics, such as the promotion of better integration of geographical names information within national and international spatial data infrastructures and linked data in relation to geographical names standardization. The Working Group on Geographical Names Data Management will provide an overview of the tasks being undertaken to implement strategy 1, on technical expertise – which is focused on the first findings, the challenges faced and

the obstacles encountered – and an outlook for the upcoming activities in the period 2023–2025. The Group of Experts is asked to approve and provide guidance on the proposed future work of the Working Group.

Documentation

Indonesian geographical names information system (SINAR): improving the interoperability and usability of geographical names (GEGN.2/2023/48/CRP.48)

Availability of Dutch geographical names as linked data (GEGN.2/2023/63/CRP.63)

Experiment in continuous update methods for the web map entitled “Japan map in multilingual notation” (GEGN.2/2023/66/CRP.66)

Report of the Working Group on Geographical Names Data Management for 2021 and 2022 (GEGN.2/2023/73/CRP.73)

Monitoring of the availability of free and easily accessible and authorized data on digital geographical names (GEGN.2/2023/74/CRP.74)

Linked open data developments within the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (GEGN.2/2023/75/CRP.75)

The gazetteers.net web application: a tool for harvesting digital gazetteers (GEGN.2/2023/76/CRP.76)

Geographical names database of Saudi Arabia (GEGN.2/2023/91/CRP.91)

Geographical names data modelling and transfer-related standards, manuals or guidelines: some ideas from the Working Group on Geographical Names data Management (GEGN.2/2023/99/CRP.99)

15. Writing systems and pronunciation

The Group of Experts will have before it, for discussion, the report prepared by the Working Group on Romanization Systems, in which it details the monitoring of the status of various romanization systems either being developed in countries using non-Roman script or the status of United Nations-approved systems being implemented in the countries concerned. Similarly, countries participating in the session may report on their progress in developing and implementing romanization systems for geographical names.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on Romanization Systems: current status of United Nations romanization systems for geographical names (GEGN.2/2023/11/CRP.11)

16. Other geographical names issues

It is recognized that Member States, divisions and working groups of the Group of Experts will submit technical papers that do not logically fit under working group subjects related to the agenda items. With regard to the agenda item, the Group will have before it papers that are not relevant to other agenda items.

Documentation

Bhumandala Nama Rupabumi Awards: a new initiative of the geographical names standardization evaluation mechanism in Indonesia (GEGN.2/2023/47/CRP.47)

17. Presentation and adoption of decisions

All proposals for consideration by the Group of Experts will be presented under the agenda item. The Group will have before it an informal paper containing the draft decisions and resolutions submitted by the Rapporteurs and is invited to adopt the draft decisions of the 2023 session.

Documentation

Informal paper with draft decisions.

18. Adoption of the report on the 2023 session

The Group of Experts will have before it the report on the 2023 session covering organizational matters relating to its work. The Group is invited to adopt the report on the 2023 session, and to entrust the Rapporteurs with streamlining and finalizing it for submission to the Council.

Documentation

Draft report of the Group of Experts on its 2023 session.

19. Arrangements for the 2025 session of the Group of Experts

In accordance with rule 6 of the rules of procedure of the Group of Experts, as set out in Council decision 2018/264, the Group will consider its provisional agenda and proposed dates of the 2025 session. Representatives participating in the session may propose items for inclusion in, or amendments to, the provisional agenda.

Documentation

Provisional agenda of the 2025 session.

20. Election of officers for the next session

The election of officers will proceed in accordance with rules 7 and 8 of the rules of procedure of the Group of Experts, as set out in Council decision 2018/264. The Group will have a Bureau elected from among the representatives of Member States that will comprise a Chair, two Vice-Chairs and two Rapporteurs and that will guide the activities of the Group during and between its sessions.

Documentation

No documentation required.

21. Other business

Member State and division representatives may wish to bring other matters to the attention of the Group of Experts.

Documentation

No documentation required.

22. Closing of the session

In accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the Group of Experts, the Chair will declare the closing of each plenary meeting of the Group.