

Forum on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage



United Nations
Group of Experts on
Geographical Names

2025 UNGEGN Session

SIDE-EVENT

Tuesday 29th April 2025

Conference Room C

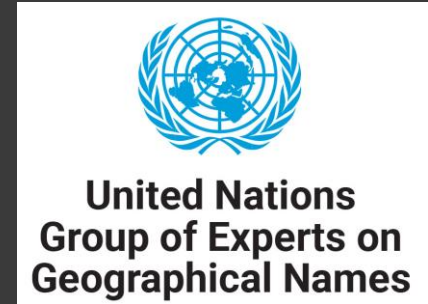
UNHQ



“WE DECLARE TO...HONOUR, PROMOTE AND PRESERVE CULTURAL
DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE, AS WELL AS LANGUAGES,
KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS AND TRADITIONS, AND FOSTER
INTERCULTURAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, INCLUDING
THROUGH ENCOURAGING STRENGTHENED INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION...”

*PACT FOR THE FUTURE , GLOBAL DIGITAL COMPACT AND DECLARATION ON
FUTURE GENERATIONS A/RES/79/1 – SEPTEMBER 2024*

Forum on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage - Programme 29.04.25



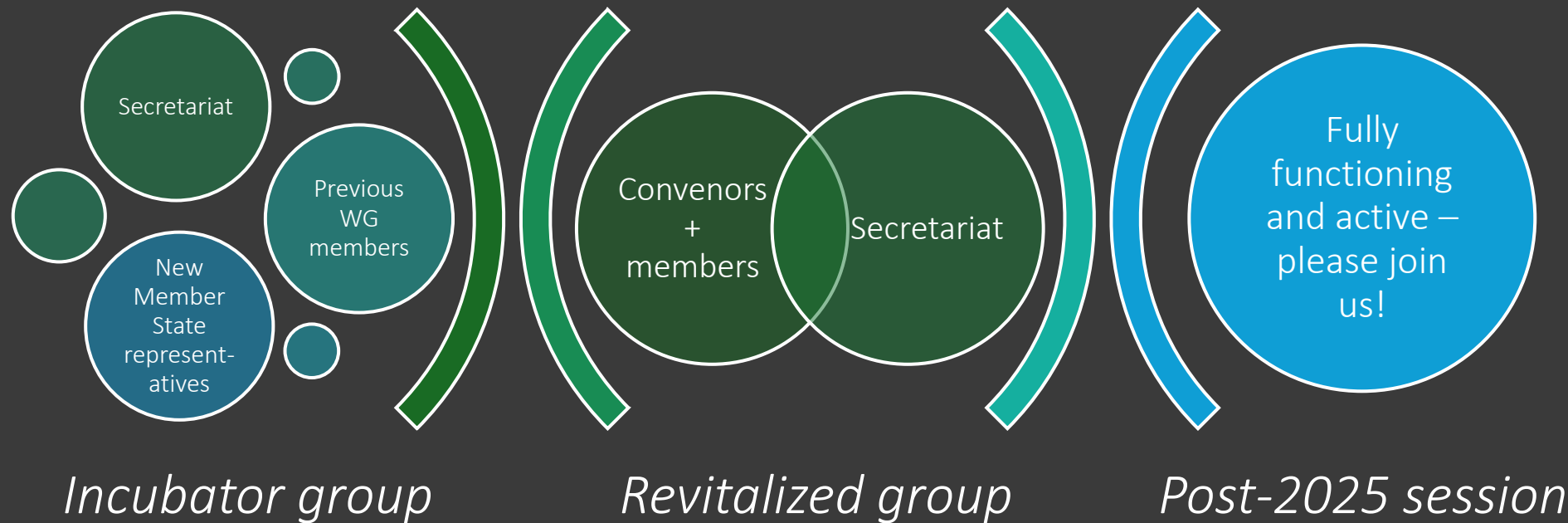
- Opening: **Mr Stefan Schweinfest**, Director, UN Statistics Division
- Keynote talk: **Ms Aluki Kotierk**, Chair, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, “Reducing Inequalities: Safeguarding cultural heritage beyond and across borders, languages and international governance”
- Geographical Name as Cultural Heritage, examples and cases of good practice:
 - Ms Ana Cristina de Rocha Berenger Resende**, Brazil
 - Ms Thulile Mthembu & Irwin Langeveld**, South Africa
 - Mr Sungjae Choo & Mr Jihwan Yoon**, Republic of Korea
 - Mr Chanda Penda**, Zambia
- The Revitalized WGGNCH: **Ms Emily Lethbridge**, WG co-convenor, Iceland
- Closing and summary: **Mr Pierre Jaillard**, Chair, UNGEGN

UNGEGN 2025: “Advancing geographical names standardization through inclusive, culturally informed and evidence-based solutions to support sustainable development”

WGGNCH – Timeline and members



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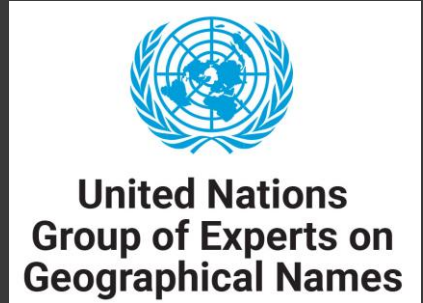


Member states currently represented:
Argentina, Austria, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Iceland, Japan, Latvia, Mozambique, New Zealand, Norway (Sámi Parliament), Republic of Korea, United Kingdom, United States, Zambia

Focus Group on Indigenous Geographical Names

UNEGN 2025: “Advancing geographical names standardization through inclusive, culturally informed and evidence-based solutions to support sustainable development”

WGGNCH – Documentation



- **WG report plus background documents** (Terms of Reference April 2025; Global Survey on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage April 2025)
- **FGIGN report** is under 8b
- **Webpages** – to be updated

A screenshot of the UNGEGN 2025 website. On the left, a sidebar titled "Documents (general)" lists agenda items 2 through 8(c). "Agenda item 8(a)" is highlighted in blue. A blue arrow points from this item to the main content area. The main content area displays details for "Agenda item 8(a). Culture, heritage and language recognition: Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity". It includes a sub-header "Addressing culturally and socially sensitive geographical names: a framework for standardization", the submitter "Submitted by Norway", and links to a summary and a report. A blue rounded rectangle highlights the "Report of the Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage" section, which includes a summary, report, and background documents. Below this, it lists "Role of geographical names in safeguarding cultural heritage in Saudi Arabia" (submitted by Saudi Arabia) and "A Place called Quitungo" (submitted by Brazil). At the bottom, it mentions "Tangata Whenua Place Names maps of New Zealand – challenges and lessons learned".

UNGEGN 2025: “Advancing geographical names standardization through inclusive, culturally informed and evidence-based solutions to support sustainable development”

WGGNCH – UNGEGN SP & PoW 2021–2029



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Geographical Names

- Declare, promote, celebrate and demonstrate that geographical names matter because they recognize unique culture, heritage and language that connect people to physical locations;

- Promote good geographical naming practices that acknowledge people's place in the world;

- Recognize that geographical names are a source of identity, encourage recognition of heritage and equality, and support Indigenous, regional and/or minority groups' language revitalization and preservation;

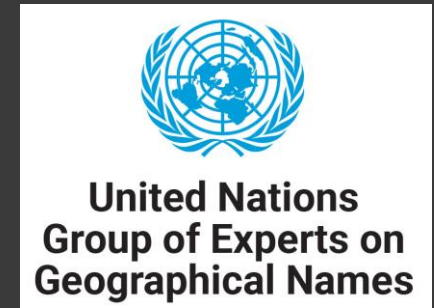
- Contribute to building technical capabilities, such as developing guidelines, legislation, communication tools and databases to enhance culture, heritage and language recognition

- Aims
- Action Items, revised work plan, Global Survey, open now until Friday 23rd May



UNGEKN 2025: "Advancing geographical names standardization through inclusive, culturally informed and evidence-based solutions to support sustainable development"

Glötuð orð – Gyrður Elíasson
b. 1961, Sauðárkrókur, North Iceland



Framundan var vegurinn
einsog strikaður jafnóðum á
fölgrænt gamalt landakort
sem við ókum eftir í þögn

*The road ahead
as if drawn at the same time on
a pale green old map
which we drove along in silence*

Bílljósín lýstu upp skilti
sem sandfokið hafði máð
allt letur af

*The headlights lit up a sign
that sand-blast had rubbed
all letters off*

