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English

**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names
2025 session**

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Item 4(c) of the provisional agenda *

Reports: Activities on the standardization of geographical names in Africa**Initial steps made in standardization and creation of a
uniform system of administering geographical names in
Zambia****Summary ****

At independence in 1964, Zambia inherited a system of street addressing from the British colonial government, which consisted of street name signage and house numbering. For example, on the Copperbelt mining companies provided housing for miners, who made up the majority of residents. However, following privatization and liberalization of the economy after 1991, the construction of infrastructure, such as housing, fell into the hands of private players who cared less about organized addressing. As a result, the rapid growth of populations led to chaotic organization in urban settlements.

In recent years, stakeholders in the national administration of geographical names identified an urgent need for an inclusive and comprehensive national addressing policy in Zambia that includes postcode and digital addressing integrated into a geographic information system. As a result, draft street naming and addressing policy now awaits final approval. The policy shall ensure that the Zambian population has access to a wide range of services that are dependent on street addressing. It seeks to help resolve the challenge of residents' limited access to some goods and services on account of an inadequate addressing system, as well as stimulate and foster growth and investment in service delivery. Further, it will promote the creation of adequate addressing infrastructure in the country. Some of the policy objectives include leveraging on resources available from cooperating partners for street addressing; providing for standardized street addressing in conformity with international practice; and, ensuring the development and maintenance of a national address database. The policy also proposes the provision of funding for street naming and addressing from the national budget and other cooperating partners and seeking technical support for effective implementation.

* GEGN.2/2025/1.

** The full report was prepared by Oswald Chanda Penda, Zambia. The report will be available under document symbol GEGN.2/2025/119/CRP.119, in the language of submission only, at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/

A programme which predates the policy formulation and resonates with some of UNGEGN's aims, the National Addressing and Postcode Project (NAPP), which was launched in 2012, is a quest to fulfil the government's goal to promote universally accessible postal and courier services that are responsive to consumer needs. Implemented by the Zambia Information and Communications Technologies Authority (ZICTA), the NAPP aims to establish a comprehensive national addressing system. In addition to developing a public, web-based database of addresses, the project involves the actual installation of addressing infrastructure, including street name signage and house numbers, in collaboration with local authorities.

The Group of Experts is invited to provide input, guidance, and support in the government's unprecedented endeavour to implement uniform guidelines for the standardization and general administration of geographical names in Zambia. The Zambian government should also be encouraged to consider converting the ad hoc committee which formulated the draft place name policy into a national authority on geographical names, as it was representative of stakeholder institutions.