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English

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

2025 session

New York, 28 April – 2 May 2025

Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Relationships, links and connections: Committee of Experts
on Global Geospatial Information Management**

**Report of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information
Management**

Submitted by the secretariat of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information
Management **

Summary:

The report outlines the activities undertaken by the Committee of Experts during the intersessional periods between 2023 and 2025. It includes a summary of relevant activities since the thirteenth and fourteenth sessions of the Committee of Experts and identifies issues for consideration. The report also covers the Committee's activities related to the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. The Group of Experts is invited to review the report and express its views on the efforts to strengthen collaboration in furthering the standardization of geographical names.

* GEGN.2/2025/1.

** Prepared by the UN-GGIM secretariat

I. Background

1. This report outlines the activities undertaken by the Committee of Experts during the intersessional periods between 2023 and 2025. It summarizes relevant activities since the thirteenth and fourteenth sessions of the Committee of Experts and identifies issues for consideration. The report also covers the Committee's activities related to the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

II. Overview of activities of the Committee of Experts in the intersessional period

Thirteenth Session of the Committee of Experts

2. At its thirteenth session, held in New York, USA, on 2-4 August 2023, the report of the Group of Experts (see [E/C.20/2023/18/Add.1](#)) was welcomed by the Committee of Experts, noting activities to implement its strategic plan for 2021–2029, including the launch of the redeveloped World Geographical Names database and the session held from 1-5 May 2023. The report notes the next session will be held from 28 April to 2 May 2025 and encourages Member States' participation. Continued support for collaboration between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts was reiterated, especially for the project on geographical names standardization. The relevance of standardized geographical names to statistics and administrative units was recognized, along with the importance of expert support and collaboration with for the United Nations Geospatial Network. Moreover, efforts by Member States to establish national geographical names authorities and develop toponymic guidelines were welcomed for preserving Indigenous languages and linguistic and cultural heritage.
3. In its report on “Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements” of the thirteenth session (2023, see [E/C.20/2023/5/Add.1](#)), the Committee of Experts provides detailed information on its efforts and progress to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements, and reflects on the Committee’s response to Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) [resolution 2022/24](#), including options for ensuring a sustainably resourced Secretariat in the 2024 budget submission, which would be crucial for the future of the work and global coordination and coherence of the Committee. In this report, the Secretariat also provides information to the Committee of Experts on the convening of the second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, held from 10–14 October 2022 in Hyderabad, India, and the continued progress made towards the operationalization of its global geospatial centres of excellence including United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China, United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in Bonn, Germany, and preparatory activities for the establishment of United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Fourteenth Session of the Committee of Experts

4. At its fourteenth session, held New York, USA, on 7-9 August 2024, the report by the Group of Experts was welcomed (see [E/C.20/2024/18/Add.1](#)), noting activities to implement its strategic plan for 2021–2029, including increased interaction across divisions, collaboration with the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, and a focus on cultural and linguistic heritage. The redevelopment of the World Geographical Names database was acknowledged, encouraging the development of a unique identifier for cities. Progress in the collaborative project between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts was welcomed, with appreciation for the leadership of Indonesia and the USA. The Group of Experts was requested to support toponymic capacity development, especially in Africa, and a regional workshop in Burkina Faso was welcomed. Appreciation was expressed to supporting organizations, and the dates for the session of 2025 were noted, urging support for the participation from small island developing States.

5. In the report on “Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements” of the fourteenth session (2024, see [E/C.20/2024/5/Add.1](#)), the Committee of Experts notes establishment of a new and enlarged Secretariat for the Committee of Experts in the 2024 programme budget comprising seven positions ([A/78/7](#)), and recognizing the important functions of the Committee of Experts and the need to support Member States in implementing related technical recommendations to strengthen their geospatial information management capacities. The report further highlights efforts to enhance global geospatial information management and the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. The Bureau reviewed preparations for the fourteenth session and emphasized diversity, equity, and inclusion. The report also covers the upcoming seventh High-level Forum in Mexico City, progress on the operationalization of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in Bonn, Germany, and the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China. Efforts to enhance the Committee's effectiveness through consultations and capacity development are also detailed, aiming to foster collaboration and optimize resources for better geospatial information management.

III. Collaborative Activities

6. As a fellow subsidiary body of ECOSOC, the Committee of Experts is driven towards strengthening and enhancing geospatial information management particularly through the achievement of its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and supporting other global development agendas and mandates. Notably, the recommendations of the 2022 review of ECOSOC and [A/RES/75/290A](#) and [A/RES/72/305](#) on the role of ECOSOC as a central mechanism for the coordination of the activities of the United Nations development system are of relevance for the Committee of Experts particularly regarding the coordination with the Group of Experts, and beyond with other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC.
7. The Committee further recalls General Assembly resolution [74/303](#), which encourages ECOSOC, as the parent body of both the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts, to create synergies and coherence among its subsidiary bodies, to address gaps, overlaps, and duplication in their respective agendas, both as they relate to the 2030 Agenda and as a whole.
8. The Committee of Experts notes the progress made by the collaborative project on shared good practices between national mapping agencies and national names authorities (see GEGN.2/2025/143/CRP.143) and looks forward to building on this work in the coming period.
9. The Committee of Experts also welcomes efforts whereby UNGEGN and UN-GGIM can further explore and identify potential areas for collaboration and joint activities, especially noting that Geographical Names is one of the adopted [Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes](#) and the UNGEGN – UN-GGIM Collaboration Project. Further, the Committee of Experts continues to support the efforts of the Group of Experts in the implementation of its Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021 – 2029.

IV. Points for Discussion

The Group of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report provided by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management and express its views on the efforts to strengthen collaboration in furthering the standardization of geographical names.