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English

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

New York, 28 April – 2 May 2025

Item 9 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Promotion and capacity-building: Strengthening publicity
and increasing awareness of the importance of
standardized geographical names**

**Bringing place names to the public: Creating promotional
videos and infographics in the Republic of Korea**

Submitted by the Republic of Korea**

Summary

The National Geographic Information Institute (NGII) of the Republic of Korea places significant importance on increasing public awareness and understanding of geographical names, alongside the implementation of governmental policy initiatives related to these names. This report outlines two key promotional initiatives undertaken since the 2023 session.

Firstly, a documentary film was produced and distributed via YouTube to enhance public comprehension of geographical names. The film aims to illuminate the cultural and historical heritage embodied in geographical names. Secondly, infographics related to geographical names were created and distributed. This includes a comprehensive year-long project in 2023 that focused on promoting one name each day, selected from those determined and announced by the NGII. Additionally, infographics were developed on topics such as the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and geographical names as cultural heritage. These are designed to enable the general public to easily grasp international discussions on geographical names and appreciate their cultural heritage value.

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** Prepared by the National Geographic Information Institute, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (Republic of Korea)

Bringing place names to the public: Creating promotional videos and infographics in the Republic of Korea¹

The National Geographic Information Institute (NGII) of the Republic of Korea is tasked with the development of national policies on geographical names and the administration of office responsibilities related to these names. As part of its mandate, the NGII actively engages in promotional activities to enhance public awareness of the importance of geographical names as fundamental spatial information and to foster broad consensus on the government's geographical names policy.

In alignment with these efforts, the NGII has produced a documentary film, along with a series of infographics for promotional purposes. These initiatives aim to highlight the historical and cultural significance of geographical names and to promote their recognition as valuable national assets. This report provides an overview of these promotional activities, their objectives, content, and anticipated impact.

1. Production of a documentary film “To My Name”

The NGII has produced a documentary film titled “To My Name” (Korean: ‘이름에 게’) to enhance public understanding of geographical names. The film aims to showcase the cultural and historical heritage encapsulated in geographical names. Experts in geography, linguistics, culture, and public relations contributed to the entire planning process, including the selection of a theme, choosing a geographical name that reflects this theme, and developing a corresponding storyline.

In recognition of the 80th anniversary of Korea’s Liberation in 2025, the documentary highlights Haebangchon (해방촌), a name associated with liberation. “Haebangchon” (where *haebang* means liberation and *chon* means village) refers to immigrant residential areas established by settlers and refugees following Korea's Liberation in 1945 and the Korean War in 1950. There are over 15 Haebangchon locations nationwide, including one in Yongsan-gu, Seoul, near the city center. Haebangchon in Yongsan is noted for its relatively well-preserved historical appearance, which appeals to the younger generation’s affinity for retro aesthetics, thereby establishing it as a prominent hot spot in Seoul.

The documentary includes interviews with residents of these areas, providing insights into the historical significance and regional identity associated with the name. The title “To My Name” conveys the message that geographical names serve as cultural heritage, linking past and present generations. The film is produced in Korean with English subtitles and is distributed via [YouTube](#), including a 30-second short-form version to engage broader audience.

2. Creation of infographics to promote national geographical names policy

The NGII launched the “Today's Name: Geographical Names 365” project (Korean: ‘오늘의 지명: 지명 365’) to enhance public understanding of and engagement with geographical names. This year-long initiative, conducted from January 1 to December 31, 2023, involved the daily selection and presentation of one geographical name in infographic format. The project featured geographical names that had been standardized and officially announced by the NGII, presenting each name’s origin, historical background, and notable stories through illustrated content to effectively engage the public. A total

¹ This paper pertains to the UNCSGN resolutions IX/7 (Dissemination of information concerning the origin and meaning of geographical names), I/4 (National standardization), and V/6 (Promotion of national and international geographical names standardization programs).

of 365 infographic pieces were compiled into an e-book, which is available on the NGII website. Appendix 1 shows an excerpt from this e-book.

Additionally, NGII produced a separate infographic series focusing on the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and geographical names as cultural heritage.’ These materials were designed to facilitate public understanding of international discussions on geographical names and to highlight their significance as cultural heritage assets. Appendix 2 provides part of this infographic series.

3. Future plans and a virtual poster

Through this promotion initiative, NGII aimed to effectively communicate the evolution and cultural importance of geographical names to the public. Looking ahead, the NGII will continue its efforts to raise awareness of the significance of geographical names and to foster both national and international interest in geographical naming policies.

The documentary film and the infographic series discussed in this paper will be showcased during the virtual poster session organized for this 2025 session.

Points for discussion:

The Group of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the report and acknowledge the efforts of the the Republic of Korea in promoting geographical names among the public;
- (b) Provide feedback to refine and enhance the effectiveness of these promotion activities; and
- (c) Discuss strategies for enhancing the promotion of the cultural and historical significance of geographical names in Member States, including best practices and policy recommendations.

02

Participation of the Republic of Korea

- Actively participating since joining the UN in 1991.
- The NGII manages the database of resolutions and recommendations for standardizing geographical names.
- One of the current vice-chairs is from the Republic of Korea.



03

UNGEGN's Current Interests




Respecting and accepting cultural uniqueness.



Efficient collection and management of names data.



Strategic plan and programme of work (2021-2029) in progress.

 Visit UNGEGN Website

unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/

04

Is the Name of Our Neighborhood a Cultural Heritage?

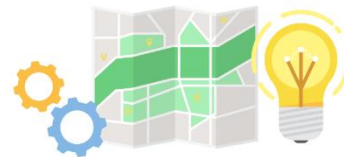
Have you ever considered this?

Geographical names embody the history, identity, and environmental elements of an area.



05

Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage



A key topic since 1992, now actively discussed.

Focuses on developing policies to preserve geographical names as cultural heritage and setting selection criteria.

06

Are All Geographical Names Cultural Heritage?

Not necessarily.

In 2012, the UN adopted six criteria.

- ① Age of a name
- ② Resilience of a name
- ③ Rarity of a name or a unique toponymic phenomenon
- ④ Testimonial value of a name
- ⑤ Appeal of a name
- ⑥ Imageability of a name



National Geographic Information Institute

The NGII is developing guidelines on geographical names as cultural heritage for the Republic of Korea.

