



1 May 2019

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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names****2019 session**

New York, 29 April–3 May 2019

Draft report

Rapporteurs: Sungjae **Choo** (Republic of Korea)
Trent **Palmer** (United States of America)

Organization of the session**A. Opening and duration of the session**

1. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution [2018/2](#), the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names held its first session at United Nations Headquarters from 29 April to 3 May 2019. The Group of Experts held [] meetings.

B. Attendance

2. The session was attended by [] participants representing the geographic/linguistic divisions of the Group of Experts (see annex). The list of participants is contained in document [GEGN.2/2019/\[\]](#).

C. Officers of the session

3. The Officers of the session were as follows:

Chair:

Bill Watt (Australia)

Vice-Chairs:

Hasanuddin Abidin (Indonesia)

Peder Gammeltoft (Norway)

Rapporteurs:

Sungjae Choo (Republic of Korea)

Trent Palmer (United States of America)



For the names of the Chairs of the divisions, see <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/divisions/>. The Officers of the working groups were:

Task Team for Africa

Convener:

Brahim Atoui

Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors for international use

Convener:

Gerhard Rampl

Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

Convener:

Peder Gammeltoft

Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers

Convener:

Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu

Working Group on Toponymic Terminology

Convener:

Trent Palmer

Working Group on Romanization Systems

Convener:

Peeter Päll

Catherine Cheetham

Working Group on Country Names

Conveners:

Élisabeth Calvarin

Leo Dillon

Working Group on Publicity and Funding

Convener:

Peder Gammeltoft

Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation

Convener:

Sungjae Choo

Working Group on Exonyms

Convener:

Kohei Watanabe

Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage

Convener:

Annette Torensjö

D. Opening statements

4. The Assistant-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, opened the session on 29 April 2019 and

presided over the election of the Chair. The Chair, Bill Watt (Australia), made the opening remarks and summarized the main tasks ahead.

5. The Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, Kira Christianne Danganan Azucena (Philippines) made a statement on behalf of the President of the Council. The Assistant-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, Ms. Spatolisano, also made a statement.

E. Adoption of the agenda

6. Also at its first meeting, on 29 April, the Group of Experts adopted its provisional agenda ([GEGN.2/2019/1/Rev.1](#)), as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the rules of procedure;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Organization of work, including establishment of subsidiary bodies;
 - (d) Credentials of representatives.
4. Reports of the Chair and the Secretariat.
5. Reports:
 - (a) Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names;
 - (b) Divisions of the Group of Experts;
 - (c) Working Group on Country Names;
 - (d) National and international meetings and conferences.
6. Cooperation and liaison with other organizations:
 - (a) International organizations;
 - (b) Economic Commission for Africa and Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.
7. National and international standardization of geographical names:
 - (a) Names collection, office treatment, national authorities, features beyond a single sovereignty and international cooperation;
 - (b) Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors for international use.
8. Social and economic benefits, supporting sustainable development, measures taken and proposed for the implementation of resolutions and evaluation of the work of the Group of Experts (Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation).
9. Issues of publicity for the Group of Experts and funding of Group projects (Working Group on Publicity and Funding).
10. Activities on national standardization in Africa (Task Team for Africa).

11. Toponymic education (Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy).
 12. Toponymic terminology (Working Group on Toponymic Terminology).
 13. Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity, including indigenous, minority and regional languages and multilingual issues (Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage).
 14. Exonyms (Working Group on Exonyms).
 15. Toponymic data files and gazetteers (data processing and tools, database management, data dissemination: products and services) (Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers).
 16. Writing systems and pronunciation (Working Group on Romanization Systems).
 17. Other toponymic issues.
 18. Arrangements for the 2021 session of the Group of Experts.
 19. Other business.
 20. Presentation and adoption of decisions.
 21. Adoption of the report on the 2019 session.
 22. Election of officers of the 2021 session.
 23. Closing of the session.
7. Also at its first meeting on 29 April, the Group of Experts approved its organization of work ([GEGN.2/2019/3](#)).
8. At its first meeting, on 29 April, the Group of Experts considered agenda item 4 and heard presentations of the reports from the Chair on the work completed so far by the Group of Experts, and the representative of the United Nations Statistics Division secretariat on the report of the secretariat.
9. At its second meeting, the Group of Experts considered agenda item 5 and heard presentations of reports by the Convener of the Working Group on Country Names and heard statements by representatives of the Member States and Divisions.

F. Adoption of the report

10. At its 10th meeting, on 3 May 2019, the Group of Experts adopted the draft report on the activities of its first session ([GEGN.2/2019/L.1](#)) for submission to the Economic and Social Council, and authorized its Rapporteurs to finalize the report, in consultation with the bureau and secretariat of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

G. Documentation

11. The documents before the Group of Experts at its first session are available at the website of the United Nations Statistics Division at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/2019-new-york-ungegn-1st-session/#documents>.

Annex I

List of geographic/linguistic divisions

Africa Central Division
Africa East Division
Africa South Division
Africa West Division
Arabic Division
Asia East Division (other than China)
Asia South-East Division
Asia South-West Division (other than Arabic)
Baltic Division
Celtic Division
China Division
Dutch- and German-speaking Division
East Central and South-East Europe Division
Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division
East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic)
French-speaking Division
India Division
Latin America Division
Norden Division
Pacific South-West Division
Portuguese-speaking Division
Romano-Hellenic Division
United Kingdom Division
United States of America/Canada Division
