

**Twenty-sixth session
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Item 19 of the provisional agenda

Toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors

**TOPONYMIC GUIDELINES FOR MAP EDITORS AND OTHER EDITORS,
FOR INTERNATIONAL USE:
PROSPECTS FOR THE 10TH UNCSGN**

(Submitted by Austria)*

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(1) A short statistical survey:

- 43 countries have published Toponymic Guidelines (TG) and/or drafts or preliminary versions to date.¹
- In the 25th Session of UNGEGN one completely new (Belgium) and four updated respectively revised versions of TG (Austria, Denmark, Finland, United Kingdom) were presented.
- For the 26th Session of UNGEGN one completely new (Ukraine), three revised editions (Germany, Poland, Slovakia) and one updated version (Finland) of TG were submitted.
- Planned for 2011: Cyprus (revised edition), The Netherlands (digital form), Switzerland.
- Planned: Uzbekistan, Turkey; Iran plans a new edition for the UNCSGN 2012², Algeria plans to submit a revised version to the conference in 2012.

(2) Prospects for the future of Toponymic Guidelines:

- More and more countries draft bilingual editions of TG (national official language and English; Sweden, Germany, Poland ...). This practice was discussed by the experts present at the 9th UNCSGN in 2007 and is regarded as an additional contribution to the promotion of geographical names standardization.
- It is to be further noted that many countries have not yet presented TG at all because of various and manifold difficulties.³ To make progress in this matter, one possible solution for these countries could be to initiate a step-by-step process, by first elaborating those chapters on which there is broad consent within the respective countries. Directions for a gradual process can be found in papers submitted to the 9th UNCSGN (E/CONF.98/CRP.26; E/CONF.98/61 and Add.1). Close cooperation with neighbouring countries sharing the same language(s) is recommended.
- Some countries have toponymic guidelines for internal use (Republic of Korea ...); this could form a basis for the elaboration of a full version for international use.
- One can observe an increasing interest for the correct pronunciation of geographical names. The template of TG foresees a chapter on pronunciation: Links to pronunciation aids (in printed version or databases containing audio files) should be included. In this respect collaboration with the UNGEGN Working Group on Pronunciation could be of great help.
- Further possibilities to make the TG more public should be taken into consideration (contacting news agencies, publishing houses; creating and maintaining a Wikipedia entry on TG).

¹ Iran elaborated Comprehensive Directions on Registration of the Iranian Geographical Names (Toponymic Guidelines).

² On the basis of the *Comprehensive Directions on Registration of the Iranian Geographical Names (Toponymic Guideline)* the „Toponymic Guidelines of Iran for Map and other Editors, for Internationale Use“ will be elaborated.

³ In the 23rd UNGEGN session the “Manual for the national standardization of geographical names” was distributed: Part two, *chapter IX* contains an article on “Toponymic guidelines for map and other editors, for international use” (by Helen Kerfoot [Canada] and Eeva Maria Närhi [Finland]) in which all the relevant items for establishing a national names programme are discussed. Annexed is a list of countries which have produced Toponymic guidelines together with the status of actuality (2006).

- Support could be given to UNGEGN secretariat in monitoring the online presentation of guidelines (reporting changes of domains etc.) by the coordinator.
- Many Toponymic Guidelines are out-of-date. Experts are asked to set up an ad hoc working group in their countries and to prepare updated versions for the 10th Conference.⁴

⁴ The convenor of the WG on toponymic training plans to hold a training course in Suriname; one item of the schedule is dedicated to the updating of the TG.