United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Fourth UN/LOCODE Advisory Group Meeting

Trent Palmer (USA)
UNEGGN Bureau
27 Nov. 2020
UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names

- A subsidiary body of ECOSOC
- Develops procedures and establishes mechanisms for standardization in response to national requirements
- Creates and follows up on the implementation of resolutions
- Supported by a Secretariat at UNHQ (NY)
- Creates working groups to focus on specific areas of current concern and interest
- Has 24 geographical/linguistic divisions for grass roots work
UNGE GN Aims

• Encourage the creation of national names authorities
  • backed by legislation
  • respect local usage of names
  • collect, store and disseminate authorized names - for government and public use

• Develop single scientifically-based systems of romanization

• Encourage multi-national datasets

• Collect and facilitate the dissemination of works on place names standardization

• Study and propose principles, policies and methods suitable for helping to resolve general problems of national and international standardization
What UNGEGN is NOT

- Decision maker on feature names
- Point of arbitration on disputes over names
- Place to air political issues, even if they are related in some way to place names
- Decision maker on what processes, legislation or policy is correct for any country
UNEGGN Bureau

Officers of UNEEGN

Chairperson
• Mr. Pierre Jaillard (France)

Vice-Chairpersons
• Mr. Sungjae Choo (Republic of Korea)
• Mr. Hasanuddin Abidin (Indonesia)

Rapporteurs
• Mr. Trent Palmer (USA)
• Ms. Wendy Shaw (New Zealand)
UNGEFEN Structure

Supported by the UN Statistical Division through the UNGEGN Secretariat
UNGE GN
Working Groups

- Romanization
- Training
- Data files / gazetteers
- Evaluation / implementation
- Terminology
- Exonyms
- Country names
- Cultural heritage
- Task Team for Africa
- Coordination of Toponymic Guidelines

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Region</th>
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<tr>
<td>Africa Central</td>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>India</td>
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<td>Africa East</td>
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<td>Latin America</td>
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<td>Africa South</td>
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<td>Africa West</td>
<td>Dutch- and German-speaking</td>
<td>Pacific South-West</td>
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<td>Arabic</td>
<td>East Central and South-East Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia East (other than China)</td>
<td>Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia</td>
<td>Romano-Hellenic</td>
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<td>Asia South-East</td>
<td>East Mediterranean (other than Arabic)</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia South-West (other than Arabic)</td>
<td>French-speaking</td>
<td>United States / Canada</td>
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</tbody>
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UNGEN Liaison with other Organizations

1. International Cartographic Association (ICA)
2. Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)
3. International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS)
4. International Council on Indigenous Place Names (ICIPN)
5. International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)
6. International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Technical Committee 211 (TC/211)
7. Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH)
8. Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)
9. Unicode Consortium
UN/LOCODE Problem Statement

Because a location name is spelt differently in different languages, the UN introduced UN/LOCODE to identify locations for international trade and transport

The Advisory Group is Seeking the official version of location names
UNGEIGN Resources

UNGEIGN World Geographical Names Database (Beta version)
Small set of names: country names, capitals and major cities
http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/geonames/


French-speaking Division database:
http://www.toponymiefrancophone.org/divfranco/Bougainville/recherche.aspx

Contact information, reference documents, and links
U.S. BGN GEOnet Names Server (GNS)

Foreign geographic names database for the U.S. national names authority – the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN)

https://geonames.nga.mil/gns/html/

Presents the U.S. view on the official names, but may be useful because of variant names (cross-reference). UN/LOCODE Advisory Group is welcome to utilize this resource (data download, tailored search, feedback)
Recommendations

➢ Maintain current ISO 3166-1 country name and code information (Note: UN/LOCODE country list is not current)

➢ Utilize the beta UNGEGN World Geographic Names Database or other UNGEGN-network databases and lists

➢ Contact national authorities, where applicable

➢ Use GNS (USA) to search worldwide city names

➢ Establish liaison with UNGEGN, if necessary
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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