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**UNITED NATIONS  
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GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES**

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**Item 7 of the provisional agenda**

**Implementation of resolutions and activities relating to  
the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation**

**UNGEGN and UNCSGN documents: availability on the UNGEGN website\***

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## UNGEGN and UNCSGN documents: availability on the UNGEGN website

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### Summary

One important task of UNGEGN, in keeping with its Aims, is to make materials on the standardization of geographical names widely available. A significant step towards this is developing a central repository of the technical documents presented at both UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) and UNGEGN Sessions. Much work has been completed in archiving these documents and the UNGEGN Secretariat has now made several thousand of them publicly available on the UNGEGN website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegn/>).

This document indicates what has been accomplished so far, the usefulness of the archived collection, and the need for the assistance of UNGEGN experts in completing this task.

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### Context

The Aims of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) include emphasizing the importance of the standardization of geographical names, collecting the results of this work and facilitating its dissemination, and providing a vehicle for liaison and coordination of the work in different countries.

To facilitate UNGEGN's endeavours, the UNGEGN Secretariat plays a focal point and has been instrumental in gathering national documents since the Group's early years (resolutions I/1 and I/5), in preparing and disseminating an *Information Bulletin* (resolution V/24), and since 2002 in keeping both UNGEGN experts and the general public aware of UNGEGN activities through the UNGEGN website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegn/>).

The UNGEGN website has now had several iterations of structure and appearance, with an ever increasing array of information and examples being available relevant to the standardization of geographical names. Today's website includes sections on:

- Mandate of UNGEGN;
- Information relative to the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN), including rules, organization chart, **reports, documents** and resolutions;

- Information relative to **UNGEGN Sessions**, including the statute, terms of reference, organization, **reports**, and **documents**;
- UNGEGN Divisions;
- UNGEGN Working Groups;
- UNGEGN Bureau and Liaison officers;
- UNGEGN World Geographical Names Database;
- National Names Authorities;
- Publications;
- Events;
- Links;
- Contacts

One very important element of the website is the collection of documents that have been written and presented by several generations of experts at UNGEGN Sessions and the Conferences (UNCSGN), since the first meetings of a small expert group held in 1960. Comprehensive lists of both sets of documents are found on the UNGEGN website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegn/general.html> and <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/ungegn/confGeneral.html>).

For most of today's UNGEGN experts and individuals involved in geographical names standardization, access to this range of technical documents spanning over 50 years is certainly limited within their own country. Only a few UN member states have participated in all the sessions and conferences and so might possibly have retained office copies of the reports and technical documents presented. Before widespread word processing and computer use, paper copy presentations were duplicated and distributed to participants. These copies were not necessarily kept by a country for reference in subsequent years; particularly as staff changed and offices moved paper copies were lost. So, even countries that participated frequently at these UN forums have access to only some of the documents presented at the two initial meetings, 28 sessions and 10 conferences from 1960 to the present day. Furthermore, some countries have only attended a few gatherings and others have not been UN member states from the outset. Therefore, to meet the needs of UN experts as well as the general public, centralized archives of all the documents presented to Conferences and UNGEGN Sessions appeared a natural solution to make this valuable information more widely available.

At the United Nations in New York, some of the technical papers and reports have been collected over the years and have been held variously (and incompletely) by the UN Statistics Division, UN Cartography, the UN Map Library, and the Main UN Library (Dag Hammarskjöld Library). In the 1990s, in keeping with resolution VII/14, a major effort was made to catalogue the various UNCSGM and UNGEGN technical papers, to find their location at the United Nations, and so to provide the potential sources of documents that would assist the UNGEGN Secretariat in responding to requests for earlier technical documents. This inventory was presented as W.P. 8 at the 20<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Session in 2000.

Now with the possibility of digital document storage on the UNGEGN website and access to the site from around the world, the archiving of UNCSGM and UNGEGN papers has the potential of providing a significant resource. Free access to these documents in pdf format can bring a vast amount of reference material on geographical names standardization to a global audience.

Over 3400 documents have been presented at sessions and conferences and provide valuable information about the state of geographical names standardization since 1960. Now that many are on

the UNGEGN website they are available to current UNGEGN experts and interested public. Such documents are proving useful to Working Groups that can select the documents relevant to their own mandate and tasks; to divisions that can access earlier work of countries in their division; to individuals who can track progress in their own country or worldwide on a variety of topics; ... and so on.

Our aim is to make this archival resource as robust and complete as possible. For the most recent Conferences and Sessions (at least since 2002) this is relatively straight forward – as most papers exist as digital files. However, for the early years more work was (and still is) needed to locate copies of documents. Some are still missing and your assistance in finding copies would be very much appreciated.

My thanks are extended to Vilma Frani, Sabine Warschburger, and their colleagues in the UN Statistics Division who have been so helpful with scanning documents and putting them on the UNGEGN website, and to former employees of the UN Map Library who paved the way with the scanning of many UNGEGN documents, to Ferjan Ormeling and Hubert Bergmann who have helped locate missing UNGEGN documents, as well as to Hans Stabe (in charge of the UNGEGN Secretariat in the 1990s) who worked with me earlier to catalogue the particular UN locations of the various documents presented on the standardization of geographical names.

#### **Documents from early meetings of the Expert Group and subsequent UNGEGN sessions**

Technical documents and reports from the following meetings and sessions have been gathered and uploaded to the UNGEGN website:

First meeting	New York	1960	Second meeting	New York	1966
1 <sup>st</sup> Session	Geneva	1967	15 <sup>th</sup> Session	Geneva	1991
2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	New York	1970	16 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	1992
3 <sup>rd</sup> Session	New York	1971	17 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	1994
4 <sup>th</sup> Session	London	1972	18 <sup>th</sup> Session	Geneva	1996
5 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	1973	19 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	1998
6 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	1975	20 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	2000
7 <sup>th</sup> Session	Athens	1977	21 <sup>st</sup> Session	Berlin	2002
8 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	1979	22 <sup>nd</sup> Session	New York	2004
9 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	1981	23 <sup>rd</sup> Session	Vienna	2006
10 <sup>th</sup> Session	Geneva	1982	24 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	2007
11 <sup>th</sup> Session	Geneva	1984	25 <sup>th</sup> Session	Nairobi	2009
12 <sup>th</sup> Session	Geneva	1986	26 <sup>th</sup> Session	Vienna	2011
13 <sup>th</sup> Session	Montreal	1987	27 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	2012
14 <sup>th</sup> Session	Geneva	1989	28 <sup>th</sup> Session	New York	2014

Some 1600 UNGEGN technical documents are available on the UNGEGN website, but a few are still missing. Your assistance is needed to locate the following to complete this part of the archiving project:

7<sup>th</sup> Session, 1977    WP 1, 2  
 22<sup>nd</sup> Session, 2004    GEGN 22/12

## Documents from UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN)

Technical documents and reports from the following UN Conferences have been gathered and uploaded to the UNGEGN website:

1 <sup>st</sup> Conference	Geneva	1967	6 <sup>th</sup> Conference	New York	1992
2 <sup>nd</sup> Conference	London	1972	7 <sup>th</sup> Conference	New York	1998
3 <sup>rd</sup> Conference	Athens	1977	8 <sup>th</sup> Conference	Berlin	2002
4 <sup>th</sup> Conference	Geneva	1982	9 <sup>th</sup> Conference	New York	2007
5 <sup>th</sup> Conference	Montreal	1987	10 <sup>th</sup> Conference	New York	2012

There are some 1800 Conference documents to be made available. The situation is more complex than for the UNGEGN documents, as in addition to the original documents there are some translated texts and a considerable number of abstracts existing as separate documents, and many of these abstracts have also been translated into some or all of the UN languages.

To obtain basic coverage of these Conference documents, at the time of writing this paper, we are still searching for the following:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Conference: E/CONF.53/C.1/1 Draft report of Committee I  
 E/CONF.53/INF/1 Add.1 General arrangements  
 E/CONF.53/INF/2 List of documents issued for the Conference  
 E/CONF.53/L.1/Add.2 Preparations ... by the UNGEGN Secretariat  
**E/CONF.53/ L. 26 Add.1, 27-34, 36, 52, 54, 56, 60-61, 63, 72, 77, 80, 86 ... Technical documents**  
 (various language forms missing – see website)  
 E/CONF.53/MISC.1 and /Add.1 Provisional lists of representatives
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference: E/CONF.61/1, /2, /3 Agendas and draft report  
 E/CONF.61/C.1/L.1; /C.2/L.1; /C.3/L.1; /C.4/L.1; /C.5/L.1 and /L.2 ... draft committee reports  
 E/CONF.61/INF.1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Any versions of: documentation, document list, officers, participants  
**E/CONF.61/L.1-7, 52-54, 56 Add1, 60-113 ... Technical documents**  
 (and various language versions of some other documents – see website)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference: E/CONF.69/1 Provisional agenda  
 E/CONF.69/2 Rules of procedure  
 E/CONF.69/3 Various parts of the draft report  
 E/CONF.69/INF.1 Documentation  
 E/CONF.69/INF.2 Advanced information  
 E/CONF.69/INF.5 Establishing technical committees  
 E/CONF.69/C.1/L.1-C.V/L.5 28 papers referring to draft resolutions  
**E/CONF.69/L.3-8, 12-13, 25-28, 32, 43-44, 53, 70, 88-92, 114, 134, 141, 145-147**  
**... Technical documents**  
 E/CONF.69/MISC. 7-9 Participants, notices, etc.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Conference: E/CONF.74/INF.3 & Rev. 1 Add.2 Various lists of documents  
 E/CONF.74/INF.4/Add.1 & Rev.1 Updated lists of participants  
 E/CONF.74/INF.5 Opening remarks: Max D. de Henseler (English & French)  
 E/CONF.74/INF.6 Terminology presentation (English & French)  
**E/CONF.74/L.11-13, 19, 39, 44, 68, 72, 77, 89, 102, 120-122 ... Technical documents**
- 5<sup>th</sup> Conference: E/CONF.79/1 Spanish: Programa provisional

E/CONF.79/2 French, Spanish of Rules of Procedure  
**E/CONF.79/L.44 Add1 ... Technical document**

6<sup>th</sup> Conference: E/CONF.85/3/Add 1-3 Parts of Draft Report of Conference  
 E/CONF.85/CRP.5 Draft Report of Committee III  
**E/CONF.85/WP40 (Poland), 45 ... Technical documents**

8<sup>th</sup> Conference: E/CONF.94/Misc. 1, 2 Re Agenda and Organization of work  
 E/CONF.94/L.1, 2, 3 Draft agenda, report and resolutions  
 E/CONF.94/INF.3 Various forms of the list of participants  
 E/CONF.94/INF.92, Corr.1 & 2 Technical exhibitions

Also needed are various abstracts in different languages (see website for missing items)

### **Action requested**

You will understand and appreciate the value of adding to the materials on the UNGEGN website so that documentation archived from previous Conferences and UNGEGN Sessions can be as complete as possible to record the work of all experts for future reference.

If you have collections of these earlier documents, please check whether you have any of those still required for UNGEGN's archives.

If you do have copies of any of the missing items, please contact the UNGEGN Secretariat (geoinfo\_unsd@un.org). Arrangements can then be made with you so that scanned pdf versions can be created and added to the UNGEGN website.