



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
9 July 2012

Original: English

Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

New York, 31 July-9 August 2012

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Ninth Conference
(for distribution only)**

Country report of Canada

Summary**

In Canada, the national names authority is the Geographical Names Board of Canada, which includes members from all 13 provinces and territories. Decisions regarding names are made at the provincial and territorial levels, and a national secretariat coordinates the activities of the Board and assists in maintaining the Canadian geographical names database. Since the last Conference, the Board has published a new edition of its *Principles and Procedures for Geographical Naming*, and several members have launched online gazetteers or other publications. Toponymic data in the Canadian geographical names database is part of the Canadian geospatial data infrastructure, and Board members are working with the Canadian Council on Geomatics to develop a national repository for digital delineations of Canadian toponyms. Board members have access to the full national data set through a private online application. A subset of the Canadian geographical names database is available to the public online through the name query on the Geographical Names of Canada website, which has been upgraded and restructured in the past two years. The site is now fully accessible to the visually impaired and persons using assistive technologies, and the name query now performs faster, more customizable searches, with more options for output formats. Through the use of the Unicode standard, the site is also capable of displaying special hard-to-construct characters using diacritics which are used in many aboriginal language names. The site can also display the syllabics used to write the Inuit language. A pilot project was undertaken to develop a prototype for multilingual maps in Canada's North, and work is being done to develop strategies for promoting official geographical names in various online applications such as Google Earth.

* E/CONF.101/1.

** The full report was prepared by Heather Ross, Toponymist, Secretariat of the Geographical Names Board of Canada, and is available in the language of submission only from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf10.html>.

