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Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams since the Ninth Conference

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names: meetings and work in the period 2007-2012

Summary**

Since the Ninth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in 2007, the Group of Experts has convened two sessions: the twenty-fifth session, held in Nairobi in 2009, and the twenty-sixth session, held in Vienna in 2011. Both sessions were well attended, had many papers filed and included special presentations, workshops, exhibitions and informal meetings of divisions and working groups.

Between the sessions, ongoing work has been undertaken by Member States, the 23 geographical/linguistic divisions, 10 working groups, a task team for Africa and a coordinating group for toponymic guidelines.

The sessions have followed advances in implementing United Nations resolutions, often through the activities of the working groups, and have assured the continuity of training, both through courses around the world and through web-based toponymy course units. The Group of Experts has made a special effort to raise the profile of geographical names standardization in Africa, has coordinated with the International Geographical Union and the International Cartographic Association to realize the establishment of a joint working group/commission linked with the needs of the Group, has facilitated the production of a press kit and promotional postcards for the sessions, and has promoted the work of the Group at recent meetings of the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management.

* E/CONF.101/1.

** The full report was prepared by Helen Kerfoot (Canada), Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and is available in the language of submission only from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf10.html>.



The website of the Group of Experts has been expanded to include the archival documents of most of the conferences and sessions, a world geographical names database, sample national documentation relevant to standardization and a portal to national authorities and online toponymic databases. The Group has established or maintained liaison with a variety of international organizations dealing with the study, use and standardization of geographical names.
