

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers (WGTDG)**  
27 August, UN Headquarters, New York

Zaccheddu opened the meeting at 6:12 P.M. on Monday August 27, 2007

1) Introduction

Zaccheddu introduced himself and announced that in the absence of Randy Flynn he would be convening the meeting.

2) Review of the agenda

Zaccheddu announced that the agenda was very similar to the one the Working Group operated under at its meeting in Madrid. He asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. When none were offered he asked that the agenda be accepted by consensus, which it was.

3) Coordinated activities with of the Working Group according to the work plan

3.1

Zaccheddu announced that the Working Group website was active and advised members to contact Ms. Mimi Urbanc if they had any supplemental material to be posted at the website.

3.2

Burgess displayed and explained the contents of the UNGEGN Technical Manual for the Standardization of Geographical Names including the inclusion of the Working Group's chapter on "Toponymic data exchange formats and standards" which provides the Unicode and ISO bit map for displaying characters. She then reported that the Working Group Toponymic data exchange formats and standards, who had compiled the original report, had been subsumed into the WGTDG upon completion of its work.

3.3 & 3.4

It was agreed that Working Group should continue its current relationship with the Unicode Consortium, and strengthen that relationship through members attending Unicode Consortium conferences and establishing informal contacts to inform Consortium members about the work of the Working Group. It was also suggested that the Working Group, through Burgess, Päll, and Flynn submit any newly adopted Romanization Systems to Unicode for information. It was also suggested that gaps in current systems be pointed out to Unicode for inclusion in their representation. Finally, it was suggested that those currently engaged with Unicode encourage them to stay informed of the Working Group's work on the standardization of data transfer mechanisms.

Flynn will send a liaison report regarding the Working Group to be read at the upcoming TC 211 25<sup>th</sup> plenary session in Xi'an. Andersen agreed to take into consideration a possible representation at the TC 211 session in Copenhagen. It was agreed that an official liaison needs to be appointed by the Working Group to take over the ISO activities of Flynn for the meeting in Copenhagen.

Kerfoot agreed to research who the current contact for UNGIWG (UNSDI) is so that the ongoing relationship with that organization can be continued and strengthened.

It was agreed that the Working Group should establish a liaison with the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) especially with the advent of The Gazetteer Service Profile of the Web Feature Service, sometimes referred to as Web Gazetteer Services (WGS). Zaccheddu volunteered to serve in this role.

It was agreed that relations should continue with the Alexandria Digital Library, and the Working Group would ask Mr. Flynn to continue to liaise with that organization.

### 3.5

It was announced that two papers (EuroGeoNames Project & Brazilian Pan-American Project) relating to practical programs of toponymic data exchange will be given during the conference, and that those models could be incorporated into the Working Group's "Draft Toponymic Data Exchange Standard". In addition there will be three other Country models (Norway, Spain, & Finland) presented at the Working Group's workshop on Tuesday. It was also suggested that that excerpts from the presentation by Dr. Dozie Ezigbalike from Ethiopia be included. Kerfoot agreed to ask Dr. Ezigbalike for copies of his presentation.

It was recommended that discussion of the United Nations Geographical Names Database be postponed until after the presentation of the database on Tuesday morning. However, Kerfoot agreed to find out who will be the point of contact in the future.

### 3.6

Zaccheddu reminded the Working Group of the workshop scheduled for Tuesday at 1:30 PM – 2:45 PM. He made reference to the "Thoughts for Discussion" sheet attached to the agenda that was provided by Flynn. He asked the Working Group to review both the attached paper, as well as the "Draft Toponymic Data Exchange Standard" and be prepared to give opinions on what the revised Standard should cover.

## 4) New Business

The compiling and publishing of technical handbooks and training materials was discussed. It was decided to wait until the revised "Draft Toponymic Data Exchange Standard" was revised until material on designing databases is compiled.

Yost and Palmer agreed to research the reported ongoing work in the US to collect and organize published material relating to toponymic data modeling and database design, which was thought to be mainly material from the Pan American Institute on Geography and History (PAIGH) applied toponymy courses. Again, the models of the Brazilian and Ethiopian efforts were mentioned. The probability of creating a Website containing these materials was discussed and encouraged.

Zaccheddu presented the outcome of the sub-group meeting on "Future of gazettiers" on Friday, August 24. The main point to note from the sub-group meeting was that the needs and concerns raised by Mr. Ferland has to be confronted with the currently existing technical solutions within spatial data infrastructures. Mr. Ferland invites the WG members to contact him for further discussion.

## 5) Ninth U. N. Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names

It was decided that the Working Group would not put forth any proposed resolutions, but would continue to fulfill resolutions put forth at previous Conferences.

## 6) Other business, plans for future meetings.

It was decided that the next meeting of the Working Group would be held in conjunction with EuroGeoNames workshop to be held in the spring/summer of 2008. The exact date will be forth coming.

Kerfoot proposed, that with Flynn's concurrence, Zaccheddu be appointed Deputy, or Co-convenor of the Working Group. The proposal passed by consensus, and Zaccheddu agree to serve, pending Flynn's concurrence.

7) Closing

Zaccheddu thanked the Working Group members for attending, their enthusiastic participation, and closed the meeting.