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**Eighth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**
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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 Seventh Conference**

Report of Lithuania

Submitted by Lithuania

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NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

1. The Administrative Structure and the Activities of the Institutions for the Standardisation of Place Names

Standardization of geographical names is the responsibility of the Government. The State Committee of the Lithuanian Language at Seimas (Parliament) of Lithuania functions as the names authority. A consultative subcommittee has been set up to deal with geographical names, it comprises of linguists, cartographers as well as representatives of various government agencies.

The official usage of place names in the Republic of Lithuania is defined by the Law on the State Language, Article 14: "Official, standardised forms of place names are written in the official language in the Republic of Lithuania." The standardisation of the place names was basically carried out before the Second World War, in 1935 and 1936. Since the reestablishment of the independence of Lithuania in the early 1990s, it has been the responsibility of the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language. The Commission's Sub-Committee for Proper Names, which consists of a panel of linguists, geographers, cartographers and, when the need arises, of historians, deals with issues of the forms and use of the concrete place names and the lists of place names.

Changes to the names of the administrative units or residential areas of Lithuania are made by government resolutions on the initiative of the local governments. According to the 1996 government resolution (edition of the year 2000), the Commission is to give its recommendation based on the decision made by the experts of the Proper Names Department of the Institute of the Lithuanian Language. In 2001, for instance, the Commission approved new names for residential areas in four instances; in one instance it recommended another form of a place name.

The Law on the Administrative Units and their Boundaries of the Republic of Lithuania provides that the streets, buildings and other constructions, under jurisdiction of local governments, are named by resolutions of the councils of the local governments, with the approval of the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language (Article 9). In 2001, for instance, the Language Commission approved the names of about 250 streets, squares, etc. The official forms of place names – residential areas, streets and so on – are entered in the Register of Residential Places (run by the Cadastre and Register of Land Other Immovable Property). The Register contains data from 1923 – the year the first population census was carried out in Lithuania**.**

The Law on Geodesy and Cartography of the Republic of Lithuania passed by the Seimas in 2001 provides that the place names in maps and geo-referential databases are given according to the UN standard recommendations, after they have been approved by the Language Commission and entered in the lists and reference books.

In 2001, a panel of specialists in geography attracted attention that a list of dubious geographical names was published in "Valstybės žinios", the official publication of laws. In early 2002, the

Language Commission sent the conclusions reached by the experts concerning the place names in the border area, published in documents approved by the Government. The Technical Department of the Institute of Aerogeodesy and the specialists of the Proper Names Department of the Institute of the Lithuanian Language carried out the investigation.

Failure to use authentic and official Lithuanian place names is an offence, punishable according to the Code of the Violation of the Administrative Law of the Republic of Lithuania (the 17 February 2000 edition). The State Inspectorate of the Lithuanian Language has the right to take punitive measures.

2. Mapping and Charting programmes

Activities of the national mapping authority – National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania (on 1 of July 2001 reorganized from the National Service of Geodesy and Cartography under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania) is directed to enter geographical names on official maps. The National Land Service relies mainly on published sources and the collection of place names at the Institute of Lithuanian Language. All official maps will be checked (onomastic expertise) at the Onomastics Department of the Institute of Lithuanian Language. Cartographers of the National Land Service prepare state mapping programs.

Several cartographical databases and maps of Lithuania have been prepared, from 1997 up to 2002, by the National Service of Geodesy and Cartography under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and by National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania. They are the following:

Digital Cartographical Database KDB10LT at scale 1:10 000 on the basis of Orthophoto Maps of Lithuania at scale 1:10 000 is under production. *Topographical Maps* in analogue form from this Database are prepared. Orthophoto maps at scale 1:10 000 and 1:5 000 (for urban areas) were produced with help of Swedsurvey AB, the Overseas Agency of the National Land Survey of Sweden.

Topographical Maps of Lithuania at scale 1:20 000 according to NATO standards - city plans of Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda.

Topographical Maps of Lithuania by NATO standard at scale 1:50 000 were prepared according to NATO standards (covers 70% of Lithuania) in digital and analogue form.

Digital Georeference database at scale 1:1000 000 (MapBSR) integrated into the georeference Database of the Baltic Sea region. This Database covers 100% of Lithuania.*Digital Database LTDBK50000-V of satellite imagery at scale 1:50 000.* Maps in analogue form are published from this Database (covers 100% of Lithuania, and consists of 135 sheets). This maps were produced by assistant of Swedish company "Satellitbild AB".

Delimitation maps of the state border between Lithuanian Republic - Latvian Republic, Lithuanian Republic - Byelorussia Republic published at scale 1:10 000, Lithuanian Republic - Russian Federation published at scale 1:50 000.

Navigation charts (Sea charts). Maps of the state maritime border in the Baltic Sea between the Lithuanian Republic - Russian Federation at scale 1:200 000, and Lithuanian Republic - Latvian Republic at scale 1:225 000, that cover virtually all of the Lithuanian territorial sea and economical zones, are published.

Aeronavigation charts at scale 1: 250 000 (series 1501 and 1501 AIR) according to NATO standards (covers 23% of Lithuania), are published.

Other maps. JSC "Institute of Aerogeodesy" has published administrative maps of districts – Kaunas, Vilnius, Telšiai and Klaipėda – at scale 1:200 000. Publication of maps at scale
1: 500 000 has been planned.

3. Dictionaries, Databases and the Official Lists of Place Names

The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language approved the List of Lithuanian Place Names on 28 August 1997 (Resolution No 63). Included in the list are the names of all major residential areas and administrative units (cities, towns, former market towns and villages), places connected with Lithuanian culture and famous cultural figures as well as the names of larger rivers, lakes, woods and marshes, a total of 2,538 names. The place names are stressed, with the stress paradigm (for the accentuation of other than the nominative case); the administrative status and locality are indicated.

On 29 May 1997 the Language Commission approved the list of traditional Lithuanian place names of the Kaliningrad (Karaliaučius) region. On 29 October 1998 the Commission approved the list of traditional place names in Poland. On 27 May 1999 the Commission approved the list of the forms of place names in Belarus (Gudija) which should be used in the Lithuanian Language. On 27 April 2000 the Commission approved the list of traditional place names in Latvia used in the Lithuanian language.

These lists were published in a separate book called Lithuanian Traditional Place Names in Gudija, the Karaliaučius Region, Latvia and Poland (Vilnius, 2002).

In 2001 the Language Commission completed deliberating the Dictionary of Place Names, which contains the names of about 12,000 of residential places, rivers, lakes, forests, marches, hill forts and others. It also includes the names of Lithuanian ethnic lands and the places of exile. In 2002 the dictionary is supposed to be published both in printed and electronic versions.

The field collection of Lithuanian place names is complete with about 700 000 names in the card index at the Institute of Lithuanian Language. Apart from the collection of place names at the Institute of Lithuanian Language, the following published sources of standardized names could mentioned: *Lietuvos TSR administracinio-teritorinio suskirstymo žodynas,* I dalis. Vilnius 1974; II dalis.Vilnius 1976.
(Names of populated places, officially reaffirmed in 1991; Lietuvos TSR upių ir ežerų vardynas. Vilnius 1963 (names of rivers and lakes of Lithuania).

In the following gazetteers were published:

1) Lietuvos miškų vardynas I dalis. (Names of Lithuanian forests, an alphabetical index of 8 000 names) Kaunas 1994.
2) Lietuvos durpynų kadastras I, II dalis. (Names of Lithuanian peat bogs, 7 000 names) Vilnius 1995.
3) Vietovardžių kirčiavimo žodynas (Pronunciation dictionary of Lithuanian place names, compiled by M. Razmukaitė and V. Vitkauskas). Vilnius 1994

The state register comprising names of administrative units, populated places, streets and addresses of the Lithuania Republic has been compiled by the state owned enterprise "State Enterprise of Land and Other Immovable Property of Cadastre and Register". National toponymic digital data of administrative units from the 10 district of Lithuania, of populated places, streets, addresses and features presents approximate location in the co-ordinate system of Lithuania (LKS-94). Geographical names have the following information of location displayed: province or territory, administrative or geographical region.

There is no digital toponymic database of Lithuania. Toponyms are like a component (separate layer) of digital cartographical databases of Lithuania.

4. The Usage of Foreign Place Names

Foreign place names are written in Lithuanian according to the principles of writing foreign names and place names of 19 June 1997 resolution No 60 "On the Spelling and Punctuation of the Lithuanian Language", Clause 5 (the first edition in 1984, the second in 1991).
Names and place names in fiction, popular and children's literature in languages based on the Latin alphabet are adapted, i.e. written as they are pronounced, taking into account the reader's age and education.

In academic literature, advertising, informative publications and specialised texts foreign proper names are written in the original; more commonplace names are often adapted.

Both adapted, and the original forms of names, can be given (one of them in brackets). In the Lithuanian language, however, those proper nouns and place names that have traditional accepted forms are preserved.

Speaking about place names, these are the names of countries, cities and others, for example, *Anglija* (England), *Lenkija* (Poland), *Prancūzija* (France), *Suomija* (Finland), *Švedija* (Sweden), *Daugpilis* (Daugavpils), *Krokuva* (Cracow), *Paryžius* (Paris), *Varšuva (*Warsaw), *Viena (*Vienna), *Genuja* (Genoa) and *Mantuja* (Mantua). Foreign names and place names of languages based on other than the Latin alphabet are transcribed, taking into account the pronunciation of the words and the prevailing writing traditions in the Lithuanian language, or they are transliterated. Russian names and place names are transcribed in accordance with an instruction approved by the State Commission of the

Lithuanian Language (The Instruction on the Transcription of Proper Nouns from Russian into Lithuanian and from Lithuanian into Russian. Vilnius, Mokslas, 1990).

Permission to use the original forms of foreign place names has met with some criticism on the part of the general public. The Language Commission, however, has succeeded in stopping the Seimas from deliberating the possibility to include in the Law on the Official Lithuanian Language the directives to use the original place names of other countries only in brackets as parallel forms. The Commission has drawn up separate lists of the names of states and capital cities (Resolution No 48 of 26 January 1995 and Resolution No 54 of 2 May 1996; revised in 2001). The first list includes traditional (or shortened) forms and the official names of states, e.g. *Estija, Estijos Respublika (*Estonia, the Republic of Estonia), *Latvija, Latvijos Respublika (*Latvia, the Republic of Latvia), *Rusija, Rusijos Federacija* (Russia, the Russian Federation).

The list of the capitals of the states gives the transcribed and adapted forms of the names; the original forms in the languages based on the Latin alphabet, and the official names of states, e.g. *Stokholmas* (Stockholm), *Švedijos karalystė* (the Kingdom of Sweden); *Talinas (*Tallinn), *Estijos Respublika* (the Republic of Estonia). The traditional forms are underlined, e.g. Varšuva (Warszawa), Paryžius (Paris), Kopenhaga (København). At the end of 2001, the first volume of The Comprehensive Lithuanian Encyclopaedia was published. On 9 May 2001 a seminar on the issues of writing place names in which specialists from Estonia and Lithuania participated was held at the Institute of Science Encyclopaedias and Publishing. The publishers of the encyclopaedia tried to make it possible for the readers who know at least one form of a proper noun in a foreign language, whether authentic or adapted, could find information about it. Besides the main entry, there is a reference, for example, Appleton (*Aptonas*), a city in the north of the US, in Wisconsin, north of Lake Winnebago, at the River Fox.

In the Soviet Lithuanian Encyclopaedia published in Soviet times, adapted forms of proper names and place names were used, with the original form (in Latin-based alphabets) in brackets next to the adapted one. At the end of the volume there were indices of original and adapted forms.

The principles of writing foreign place names are undergoing a period of transition at present. In compiling the map of 1: 200 000 of Lithuania the first attempt was made to use the original spellings or transliterations of names. In 1991 the State Committee of the Lithuanian Language allowed the use of original non-transcribed name forms in scientific and other special texts, however recommending that traditional transcriptions be preserved in educational literature.

5. Exonyms

On the order of the Seimas the Language Commission has approved the lists of traditional place names or their forms of the ethnic Baltic lands, i.e. the Kaliningrad (Karaliaučius) region; in 1997, about 450 place names), In Poland (in 1998, about 300); in Belarus (in 1999, about 1,150); and in Latvia (in 2000, about 70) traditional Lithuanian place names (forms of place names).

All the traditional place names in the lists are stressed, with the stress paradigm, their administrative status, the locality and the official form of the place names (Latvian, Polish and German in the original; Russian and Belarusian, in Latin letters). There are also reverse lists in corresponding languages.

In order to maintain the usage of the traditional forms of place names and the place names themselves, the Commission adopted resolutions "On the Use of Foreign Place Names in Schoolbooks" and "On the Usage of the Traditional Place Names in the Information on the Means of Transport" in 1999 which give priority to the traditional forms place names (exonyms), while official names can be written next to them.
The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language is also planning to discuss traditional forms of place names of other countries used in the Lithuanian language.

6. The main sources

Lietuvos TSR administracinio teritorinio suskirstymo žinynas (Vilnius, 1974, d. 1; Vilnius, 1976, d. 2, about 30,000 names of residential areas);

Lietuvos TSR upių ir ežerų vardynas (Vilnius, 1963, about 7,000 hydronymes);

List of Lithuanian place names, approved by the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language on 28 August 1997. (The list is not very long. First of all it is meant for the mass media.

7. International cooperation, participation in other UNGEGN activities

Lithuania has actively participated in the work of the Baltic Division of UNGEGN 1997-2002 years.

A representative of Lithuania T. Duksa participated with a report "National Standardization in Lithuania 1997 – 1999" at the Third Meeting of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of UNGEGN, held in Moscow in 22 –24 June, 1999 and a report "National Standardization in Lithuania 1999-2001" at the Fourth Meeting of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division of UNGEGN, held in Minsk in 1-5 October, 2001.

8. Plans for the Future

Preparing for EU membership and observing the Law on the Principles of the State Protection of Ethnic Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, the Commission has drawn up the Programme for the Protection of the Dialects and Ethnic Place Names for 2001–2010, approved by the Government. The systematisation and standardisation, data computerisation and protection have been elaborated in the programme.

A systematic electronic register of officially used Lithuanian place names, the names of the bodies of water, the names of residential areas that have disappeared, other geographical names and ethnic Lithuanian place names will be started. It is planned to register place names and to bring back into official use those Lithuanian place names that have been dropped (e.g. the names of offices, roads and streets).

In the future the Commission will strive to regulate the usage of the standardised forms of place names in legal acts and documents issued by governmental institutions and local authorities.
The place names in Lithuania and Lithuanian place names of the ethnic areas of the Balts are an important part of the Lithuanian cultural heritage which Lithuania is going to present entering the multicultural community of the European Union.

Conclusions and recommendations

The place names of Lithuanian territory are collected and standardised.
The use of official standard forms is controlled.
The established database should be connected with a coordinate system to avoid of different forms of place names in different registers. Also is necessary to coordinate the registers.

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