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**PCGN Meeting Minutes, Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2013**

**BBC Monitoring, Caversham**

**Present**

██████████	Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC) (Acting Chair)
██████████	Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC)
██████████	Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC)
██████████	Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC)
██████████	Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC)
██████████	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
██████████	Defence Geographic Centre (JFIG-DGC)
██████████	BBC Monitoring (BBCM)
██████████	Head PCGN
██████████	PCGN Toponymist

1. ██████████ acting as Chairman in the absence of ██████████ Director DGC, opened the meeting and thanked ██████████ for hosting the meeting at BBCM and for having arranged an excellent tour of BBC Monitoring that morning. Apologies for absence had been received from ██████████ (JFIG-DGC); ██████████ (PCGN); ██████████ (UKHO); ██████████ (Royal Scottish Geographical Society) ██████████ (OS). It was regrettably noted that this would be ██████████ last meeting as Head PCGN, as she would be leaving at the end of June. Her enormous contribution to the work of PCGN for over 20 years would be hugely missed. ██████████ had been appointed to take over the role from 1<sup>st</sup> July.
2. The Minutes of the 187<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013 were considered and approved; the action items arising had all been completed or were to be considered under the present agenda.
3. ██████████ reported on recent work completed by the staff. A thematic report detailing the most significant items had been circulated; ██████████ drew particular attention to the policy work on Belarus, Cambodia and Kurdish names in Iraq and reported that some 1600 names for Operational products over Syria at a variety of scales had been

supplied. Consultation was ongoing on the creation of an HMG-specific toponymic query tool.

4. [REDACTED] reported on the recent meeting of the ISO Technical Committee 46, which she had attended. PCGN's involvement in the maintenance of the ISO 3166 Standard on codes for countries and their subdivisions continued to be very active and PCGN had significant influence within the maintenance agency group. This was important to HMG IT and archiving systems, as the ISO Standard was also used by NATO, and cross-government interoperability relied on consistency between HMG and international systems. The meeting had provided a good opportunity to reinforce HMG policy and the standard was felt to be quite accurate, though update and review was necessarily continuous.
5. [REDACTED] noted the forthcoming BGN/PCGN Conference to be held in Washington DC, October 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>. A particular issue was likely to be policy for Lebanon, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
PCGN remained strongly of the view that French-style spellings as used in Lebanon itself were the more practical solution. PCGN would distribute a paper outlining the background to the policy. The Committee was requested to provide input and evidence, particularly on the diplomatic side, for the appropriate method of representing names.
6. Other significant subjects to be considered at the Conference would be romanization systems and country codes, as US involvement with the ISO Standard was in a fledgling state and the newly formed US Country Codes Working Group was currently consumed with refining a 'cross-walk', tying together the codes of the previously used FIPS Standard and the ISO Standard.
7. Members reported on toponymic matters arising in their respective organisations. [REDACTED] mentioned that maps made of the UK Overseas Territories had generated discussion between the Information Management Department and the Overseas Territories Department.
8. [REDACTED] provided an update on the recent work of DGC Names Branch, which included the extraction of names from native-script Iranian mapping for in-house transliteration, significant production over Syria at 1:50,000-scale and for Image City Maps, and the ongoing establishment of a web-based tool for the supply of geographical names information (see paragraph 3).
9. [REDACTED] noted the Committee's visit to BBCM had also served to raise awareness of PCGN's work and he envisaged close collaboration between BBCM and PCGN, though the recent change to BBCM's funding meant that it might be required to follow more closely the names used by the wider BBC, which tended to be of a more *ad hoc* nature. It was hoped that BBCM could retain PCGN-recommended spellings as a cross-reference.
10. [REDACTED] raised the issue of the application of conventional *versus* native names, which had arisen at a senior level within the MOD. He had previously asked Members to consider the question of how to encourage a harmonised approach across Government

ACTIONS: PCGN & Committee
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and to promote consistency beyond HMG. It was noted that MOD press releases and FCO Country profiles, amongst other high profile documents, sometimes used inconsistent geographical names. It was felt that increasing the accessibility of PCGN's output in the public domain would lead to fewer such discrepancies.

11. [REDACTED] reported that the interim approach to the presentation of Israeli settlement names had been agreed by the FCO. It was felt however that, though politically acceptable, the agreement to use the style *Arabic/Hebrew* was difficult to apply, as it was often difficult to determine the Arabic name, if indeed there was one. [REDACTED] would arrange to meet with the relevant FCO desk officers to clarify and confirm the approach. DGC would approach relevant Defence Attachés to seek source information.
12. [REDACTED] described the *Toponymic Factfile* on Belarus, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. This had been compiled by an intern from NGA with [REDACTED] assistance, and included a full listing of the administrative structure at the first- and second-order levels.
13. [REDACTED] presented a policy and information paper on Cambodia outlining the altered policy to use anglicised names for the significant features of Cambodia as had been agreed at the previous meeting. It was noted that BGN had approved the same list, and that beyond these, names would continue to be romanized according to the BGN/PCGN romanization system for Khmer.
14. [REDACTED] reported on the creation of a new province at first-order administrative level in Chad, which had been created by dividing Ennedi region in north-eastern Chad. The new regions were Ennedi-Est and Ennedi-Ouest. PCGN would forward details to the Committee.
15. [REDACTED] stated again that [REDACTED] would be leaving PCGN at the end of June and noted what a great loss her knowledge and experience would be to the organisation. He thanked her for her tremendous work over the past 21 years, and the past 3½ years as Head PCGN, and presented her with a framed print from DGC. [REDACTED] warmly thanked the Committee and DGC for the gift and noted that she had also received a gift from FCO at the previous Management Committee meeting.
16. [REDACTED] was also thanked for his assistance at PCGN during [REDACTED] maternity leave. It was hoped that the arrangement for DGC Names Branch staff to act as occasional support staff at PCGN would be continued.
17. The Chairman closed the meeting thanking the Members for their attendance and again reiterating the thanks to [REDACTED] for hosting the tour and meeting.

ACTIONS:  
PCGN &  
DGC

ACTION:  
PCGN  
[complete-  
see below]

### Action Items – Summary

- PCGN would distribute a paper outlining the background to the policy for Lebanon.
- The Committee was requested to provide input and evidence, particularly on the diplomatic side, for the appropriate method of representing names in Roman-script in Lebanon. PCGN had always advocated the use of French-style spellings, and sought confirmation from the Committee that this was still considered the most appropriate approach.
- [REDACTED] would arrange to meet with the relevant FCO desk officers to clarify and confirm the preferred approach to the presentation of names for Israeli settlements.
- DGC would approach relevant Defence Attachés to seek source information for the Arabic names of Israeli settlements.
- PCGN would forward details of the new regions in Chad to the Committee. ***These were Ennedi-Est and Ennedi-Ouest, which had been formed by the division of Ennedi region. The region centres were believed to be Am-Djarass and Fada respectively.***