Sixth United Nations Conference
on the Standardization
of Geographical Names
New York, 25th August-3 September, 1992
Agenda Item 11 (a)

WRITING SYSTEMS AND GUIDES
TO PRONUNCIATION:
ROMANIZATION

Guideline to the Romanization
of Korean

Submitted by the Democratic
People's Republic of Korea

GUIDELINE
FOR THE ROMANIZATION OF KOREAN

Submitted by the Democratic
People's Republic of Korea

Pyongyang, 1992

The guideline for the Romanization of geographical names has been worked out in keeping with the specific features of geographical names and with the principles of phonetics. It is simple and easy to transcribe Korean into Roman alphabets. It is guided by a principle that the common long-standing transcriptions are used as they are.

GUIDELINE FOR THE ROMANIZATION
OF KOREAN

Romanization is mainly based on standard Korean pronunciation. This writing system is applied to geographical and personal names. The pronunciation of transcribed Roman letters are based on international practices.

1 . Korean letters are transcribed as follows :

1) Vowels

(1) Single vowels

ㅏ	ㅓ	ㅗ	ㅜ	ㅡ	ㅣ	ㅐ	ㅔ	ㅚ	ㅟ
a	ŏ	o	u	ŭ	i	ae	e	oe	wi

(2) Diphthongs

ㅑ	ㅕ	ㅛ	ㅠ	ㅒ	ㅖ	ㅘ	ㅝ	ㅙ	ㅞ	ㅢ
ya	yŏ	yo	yu	yae	ye	wa	wŏ	wae	we	ŭi

2) Consonants

(1) Plosives

ㄱ -k	ㅋ -kh	ㄲ -kk
ㄷ -t	ㅌ -th	ㄸ -tt
ㅂ -p	ㅍ -ph	ㅃ -pp

(2) Affricates

ㅈ -j	ㅊ -ch	ㅉ -jj

(3) Pricatives

ㅅ -s	ㅆ -ss	ㅎ -h

(4) Resonant sounds

ㅁ - m   ㄴ - n   ㅇ -ng   ㄹ -r

2. The change of phonemes are transcribed as follows :

1) The s oft voiceless consonants between vowels 《ㄱ,ㄷ,ㅂ》 and those between resonant sounds and vowels are transcribed as 《g, d, b》.

e . g .   교구동   Kyogu-dong   초도   Chodo

고비리   Kobi - ri   강동   Kangdong

금교   Kŭmgyo   칠보산   Chilbosan

2) At the end of syllable or before a consonant except resonant sound , 《ㄱ, ㅋ》 are transcribed as 《k》, 《ㅂ, ㅍ》 as 《p》 and 《ㄷ, ㅌ, ㅈ, ㅊ, ㅅ,》 as 《t》.

e. g.   곡산   Koksan   갑산   Kapsan

앞산   Apsan   삿갓봉   Satkatbong

3) 《ㄹ》 is transcribed as 《l》 before a consonant or at the end of a w ord.

e . g .   울산   Ulsan   은률   Ŭnryul

4) D ouble consonants in the end of a word or in front of a consonant , only one of them is written.

e . g .   닭섬   Taksŏm   물곬   Mulkol

But in the case before a vowel, both consonants are written.

e. g.　붉은바위　Pulgŭnbawi　　앉은바위　Anjŭnbawi

3. Korean sound values change as in the follows :

1) 《ㄱ, ㅋ, ㄲ》, 《ㅂ.ㅍ》 and 《ㄷ, ㅌ, ㅈ, ㅊ, ㅅ, ㅆ》 are mainly transcribed respectively as 《ng》, and as 《m》, 《n》. If necessary, they may be written as their original phoneme.

　e. g. 백마산 Paengmasan　　꽃마을 Kkonmaŭl
　　　　압록강 Amrokgang

2) Before 《ㄹ》 and 《ㄴ》, 《ㄴ》 is transcribed as 《ll》 only when it is considered to be long-standing.

　e. g. 천리마 Chŏllima　　한나산 Hallasan
　　　　전라도 Jŏlla-do

3) When the first element of the joined word ends with a vowel, and its second element begins with a consonant except the resonant sound, the first sound of the second element is transcribed in strong sound, and 《ㄴ》 is transcribed as 《n》 when the second element begins with the resonant sound.

　e. g. 기대산 Kittaesan　　새별읍 Saeppyŏl-ŭp
　　　　뒤문 Twinmun

4. Special provisions for transcription

1) When there is a need for segmentation or when there is a possibility of confusion in pronunciation, a hyphen 《-》

-3-

may be used.

   e. g. 앞언덕 Ap-ŏndŏk   부엌안골 Puŏk-angol

        판 교 Phan-gyo   방어동 Pang-ŏ-dong

2) The first letter of all geographical names is capitalized.

   e. g. 평안남도 평성시   Phyŏngannam-do Phyŏngsŏng-si

3) In the transcription of geographical features and other proper nouns the first letter is written by a voiced cosonant and in the case of administrative units a hyphen 《-》 may be inserted between proper noun and unit.

(1)
산	San	거리	gŏri	고개	gogae	대	dae
봉	bong	교	gyo	골	gol	각	gak
벌	bŏl	관	gwan	곶	got	강	gang

(2)
도	-do	시	-si	군	-gun	면	-myŏn
리	-ri	동	-dong	구	-gu	구역	-guyŏk

4) In the transcription of geographical names combined with figures, Arabic numerals are mainly used. In some cases they may be transliterated or translated.

   e. g. 3.1동   3.1-dong or Samil-dong

        9.18저수지   September 18 Res.

5) Personal names are written by family name first , followed by a space and then the given names with the first

letter capitalized.　　Each letter of the name of Chinese character　origin is written separately. In spite of the voiced consonant in the first letter of the second syllable, it is transcribed by a voiceless cõsonant.

e. g.　김꽃분이　Kim Kkotpuni

박동구　　　Pak Tong Gu

안복철　　　An Pok Chŏl

6） Some proper names which　cannot be abruptly changed in view　of international practices　and long-standing transcriptions, may remain intact.

e. g.　평양　　Pyongyang