Urdu

The United Nations recommended system was approved in 1972 (II/11) and amended in 1977 (III/12), based on a report prepared by D. N. Sharma. The tables and their corrections were published in volume II of the conference reports[1,2].

There is no evidence of the use of the system either in Pakistan, India or in international cartographic products. Instead, in Pakistan the Hunterian system is officially used[3]. The resolutions III/12 (1977) and IV/17 (1982) recommended association, inter alia, with Pakistan, in carrying out further studies on the system.

Urdu (Urdū) uses the Perso-Arabic script which is written from right to left. In the script vowel points are usually omitted which makes it difficult to obtain uniform romanizations. Some of the Arabic consonants are undifferentiated in romanization which means that the system is not fully reversible.

Romanization

For the initial, medial and final forms of the principal characters in the romanization table below see the Arabic section of the report.

№	Char	Rom.	№	Char	Rom.	№	Char	Rom.
1	ا	a, i, u	14	ر	r	27	ق	q
2	ب	b	15	ڑ	ṙ	28	ک	k
3	پ	p	16	ز	z	29	گ	g
4	ت	t	17	ژ	ẓ	30	ل	l
5	ٹ	ṭ	18	س	s	31	م	m
6	ث	s	19	ش	sh	32	ن، ں	n
7	ج	j	20	ص	s	33	و	v, ẉ[B]
8	چ	ch	21	ض	z	34	(ﻬ) ہ	h, ḥ[C]
9	ح	h	22	ط	t	35	ھ	h[D]
10	خ	ḳh	23	ظ	z	36	ی	y
11	د	d	24	ع	ʿ[A]	37	ے	e, ai[E]
12	ڈ	ḍ	25	غ	gh			
13	ذ	z	26	ف	f			

[A] If preceded by short *a*, it is romanized *ʿā*, e.g. مَعمُل Mʿāmul.
[B] When و is imperceptible, e.g. in a few words of Persian origin when preceded by خ (ḳh).
[C] Word-finally after a short vowel.
[D] Marks aspiration of consonants.
[E] The character ے is used only word-finally.

Note. The Arabic ﻩ has two distinct shapes in Urdu: ﺀ / ﻩ and ﻬ / ھ. The latter denotes aspiration after consonants b, ch, d, ḍ, j, k, p, ṙ, t, ṭ.

Vowels (ب stands for any consonant character)

1	بَ	a	7	بِی	ī	13	بَو	au
2	بَا	ā	8	بُ	u	14	بْ	(B)
3	یٰ	ā	9	بُو	ū	15	ء	- (hyphen)
4	ﮯ	ā	10	بِیْ، ﮯ	e[A]	16	بّ	(C)
5	آ	ā	11	بَیْ، ﮯ	ai[A]			
6	بِ	i	12	بُوْ	o			

[A] The character ﮯ is used word-finally.
[B] Not romanized; marks absence of the vowel.
[C] Doubling of the consonant letter.

Other systems of romanization

The **Hunterian system** of romanization marks the following sounds differently:

UN	Hunterian					
		ḥ	= h	ṭh	= th
-ah (ﮦ)	= a	ī	= ī, i[A]	v	= w, v[B]
ā	= ā, a[A]	k̲h	= kh	ẏ	= zh
ḍ	= d	ṇ	= n		
ḍh	= dh	ṙ	= r		
gh	= gh	ṭ	= t		

[A] Word-finally.
[B] Exceptionally, e.g. before *i*.

References

1. *Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names*. London, 10–31 May 1972. Vol. II. *Technical papers*. United Nations. New York 1974, pp. 155–161.
2. *Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names*. Athens, 17 August – 7 September 1977. Vol. II, *Technical papers*, pp. 393 etc.
3. *Geographical Names Romanization in Pakistan*. UNGEGN, 18th Session. Geneva, 12–23 August 1996. Working Papers No. 85 and No. 85 Add. 1.