



International Federation of Surveyors  
Fédération Internationale des Géomètres  
Internationale Vereinigung der Vermessungsingenieure

## FIG Working Week 2007

FIG Working Week 2007 took place in Hong Kong SAR, China from 13th to 17th May 2007, attended by over five hundred delegates from 64 countries. Organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) together with FIG, the local organising committee was chaired by Mr Hak Chan and congress director was the capable Ms Annie Shiu. Welcoming addresses were given by Mr Lu Xinshe, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Land and Resources and director-general of the State Bureau for Surveying and Mapping Mr Hak Chan, president Raymond Chan and president Stig Enemark.

The first keynote, given by Dr Leung Chun Ying, convenor of the Non-official Members of the Executive Council of the Hong Kong SAR, underlined the importance of Hong Kong's professionals 'getting access' to mainland China. Globalisation included a growth in cross-border investment in real estate: US\$551 billion in 2006. The total value of real estate in South East Asia was, he reported, strongly growing. Dr Leung brought into discussion economy of scale; there were four global accounting firms, the fifth largest in the world so small that it escapes public notice. What will happen to the land professions?

The second keynote, by Stig Enemark, covered "The Role of FIG in Responding to Millennium Goals and the Global Agenda". Surveying and mapping, spatial information management, cadastre and land management provided a basis for poverty reduction and sustainable development. FIG would, said Ene-

mark, work closely with the World Bank and UN Habitat to support and contribute to the global agenda. Most relevant was administering the people-to-land relationship through Land Policy, Land Management, Good Governance and building the capacity to deal with this.

Keith Bell from the World Bank gave a keynote on 'Good Governance and land Administration'. The World Bank invested substantial sums of money in land-reform projects and much attention was paid to institutional aspects in relation to this: transparency, accountability and separation of bureaucracy and politics. Prof. Theo Kötter from the University of Bonn in Germany spoke about disaster management. The number of disasters worldwide had grown significantly over the past fifty years. Mega-cities with a very high population density were a challenge in this respect. Surveyors could provide great support for spatial planning; such support took the form of GPS (also for tsunami-warning systems), photogrammetry, earth observation and GIS.

Professor Holger Magel gave a keynote on good governance. What could be learned from managing mega-cities? "It is high time that FIG explains what good governance is," argued Prof. Magel. Mega-cities could be "magnets of hope" or "the last stop on the way to hell". Co-operation, participation, collective learning, targeted resources and, again, transparency, were all part of the solution. Holistic solutions needed to be adopted: ministries and departments were not "their own kingdoms". The keynote by Mr Tony Tse addressed the land market in Hong Kong. The technical

and scientific programme of the conference consisted of sixty technical sessions and almost three hundred papers. Some sessions offered high-profile presentations and the session co-ordinated by the World Bank made a particularly strong impression.

The working plans of the ten FIG commissions as adopted by the General Assembly cover a broad range of subjects: supporting dialogue between politicians and surveyors, students and young professionals, e-governance, e-business etc, and knowledge management. A crucial role is played in the working plans by spatial-information management to support rapid urbanisation, unplanned/informal development, transportation, environmental protection and land-use regulations and restrictions, cultural heritage issues, coastal-zone activity management, risk assessment and disaster management, property-market needs etc. Climate change, sea-level rise and a new awareness of tsunami danger are highlighting the need for improved administration of marine spaces, especially in densely populated coastal zones.

Further, it is recognised in the working plans that modern measurement technology and associated infrastructure, in particular for Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), Terrestrial Laser Scanning, and Location Based Positioning Services have to be better promoted. Multidisciplinary expertise and co-operation leading to integrated survey methods and systems has to be supported. Another relevant issue in the working plans is the development of pro-poor land-management approaches as a contribution to the

UN Habitat Global Land Tool Network. Also, identifying and finding solutions for assisting post-conflict areas, disaster areas, etc in rebuilding and maintaining land administration after war and natural catastrophe. Standardisation of the Cadastral Domain is a key issue. Partnerships and processes for regeneration and re-engineering of mega-cities are both significant and offer key roles for the survey industry in problem solving. Surveyors are strongly involved in the international and local property markets thanks to their education that gives a very good basis for this work in many countries. A strong focus on project and programme management remains most relevant.

## FIG Regional Conference

The sixth FIG Regional Conference is to take place for the first time in Latin America, from 12th to 15th November 2007. It is being organised by the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) and the Colegio Federado de Ingenieros y de Arquitectos de Costa Rica (CFIA)/Colegio de Ingenieros Topógrafos de Costa Rica (CIT). The latter is the FIG member association in Costa Rica. We think that Costa Rica offers best possible venue for such an important event. The theme has been selected so that it focuses on hot topics in the region: capacity building, land administration and environmental issues, especially the use and future of coastal regions. Based on the outcome of the conference "Coastal Areas and Land Administration – Building the Capacity" FIG will also prepare a FIG publication "Methodologies for Pro-Poor Coastal Zone Management".

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[www.fig.net](http://www.fig.net)