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**Q: What goals have been set by FIG under your Presidentship?**

**A:** You need to have a work plan to achieve your goals. In May this year in Hong Kong, during the FIG Working Week, we prepared all the policies, the work plans and got ready for the next four years period. As an international organisation, we aim to enhance the global standing of the surveying profession, and help eradicate poverty,

promote democratization, and facilitate economic, social and environmental sustainability.

We aim to explain to the world, how surveyors contribute in achieving these goals. I am saying this because surveyors provide the foundation to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in eradicating poverty. We constantly interact with the United Nations (UN) agencies and the World

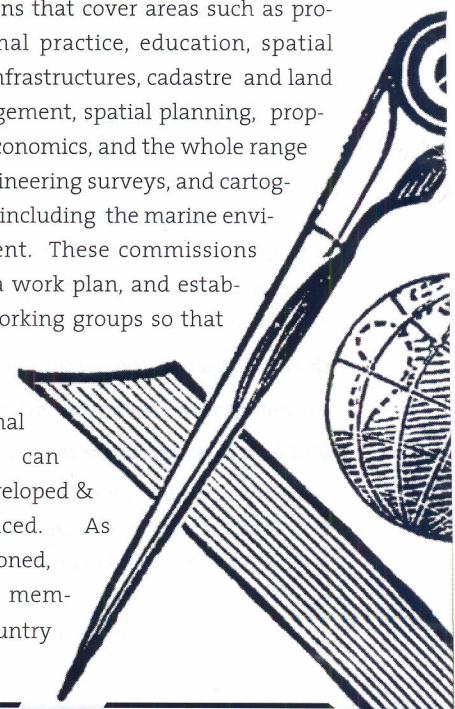
# We aim to enhance the standing of the Surveying Profession

Bank to achieve this. Our goal of flying high also includes cooperation with UN Habitat in Nairobi and with FAO. We also cooperate with our sister organisations such as ISPRS and ICA.

For developing countries, capacity building is a prerequisite to meet the challenges arising out of poverty and also for developing the basis for a sustainable future. This will also be needed for developed countries to meet the challenges in institutional and organizational evolution in the areas of surveying and land administration.

**Q: How does a nation get benefitted on being a FIG member?**

**A:** The FIG is structured in such a way that each member country can appoint delegates to our ten professional commissions that cover areas such as professional practice, education, spatial date infrastructures, cadastre and land management, spatial planning, property economics, and the whole range of engineering surveys, and cartography including the marine environment. These commissions have a work plan, and establish working groups so that the professional issues can be developed & enhanced. As mentioned, each member country



# The global surveying profession

can appoint delegates to these commissions and then be part of this professional development.

**Q: What kind of support does FIG provide to its member nations?**

**A:** Based on the demand, we can provide what can be called 'institutional support'. We will try to address any issue one may have. In case you didn't have a university education in a specific field of surveying, we, as the international surveying community, could address that by explaining and convincing the government about the benefits of addressing the issue. We also provide advice in terms of standards such as code of ethics, mutual recognition, capacity building etc. And we provide a whole range of publications relevant for national surveying organisations.

**Q: What broad proposals does FIG want to put before the governments?**

**A:** Addressing the land issues is quite often turned into matter of technology. I would advise to look at institutional issues and develop sustainable institutions. This is because registrations will not work if the institutions are not well in place

and trusted by the citizens.

When I talk about capacity building, I mean both institutional development and education and training. But education and training doesn't take you anywhere if the institutions are not well in place. Hence, my advice would be to develop a more holistic approach to land administration and understand the role of land policies and the need for sound institutions while dealing with land rights, land value, land use and land development.

**Q: At times, it is difficult to have consensus between federal and local government. How do we then address issues related to land administration?**

**A:** Laying out some overall policies, which can be applied to various regions that may be diverse in terms of culture or geography are important. Sound land policies may deal with a range of issues such as who can own land? Can women own land? In which ways can farmers own and use their land? What is the difference between private and state owned land and how can state owned land be used? What is the split of responsibility between federal state and local government? These kinds of issues must be addressed in order to build sustainable land administration systems.

**Q: How does FIG influence policy making?**

**A:** Sri Lanka did not have a Bachelor's degree in the area of surveying. They wanted us to convince the government for having that. We then talked to them and explained the benefits of having such an education.

One issue in Latin America, that may arise in Asia as well, is the issue of getting better interaction between the

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cadastre and the topographic mapping area. In Latin America there is a big gap here because despite of the fact that the topographic data is magnificent, cadastre is mainly focused upon taxation.

So, we set up a conference in Mexico in cooperation with the UN to address these issues and came out with a policy statement on these issues which has been taken on by national governments. So this way FIG helps in policy making at national level. By having such international conferences, similar issues could be addressed in Asia.

**Q: How can we take surveying and mapping to grassroots level?**

**A:** We should work towards making surveyors proud of their profession. They have progressed on finding technical solutions but they should also understand the necessity to make the politicians aware of the benefits of their work to society, so that the area can be better supported. They should be encouraged to address political level to optimize recommendations for surveying and mapping in the country. ■