

FIG Working Week 2008 in Stockholm, Sweden, 14-19 June 2008

Integrating Generations – the Biggest FIG Working Week in History

The FIG Working Week held in Stockholm, Sweden just before the Midsummer Night was the biggest Working Week ever held. During the event young surveyors were very much in evidence, and mentor sessions brought the generations together. FIG wants to mobilise the next generation of Land Professionals and continue to develop innovative and transitional solutions to address global inequality in land and property ownership and tenure.

The Working Week was hosted jointly by the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) and the Swedish Association of Chartered Surveyors (Sveriges Lantmätareförening, SLF), which at the same time celebrated its 100th Anniversary. The theme of the Working Week “*Integrating Generations*” was in line with the overall theme of the current FIG Council: “*Building the Capacity*”. 950 participants from 95 nations attended the event and the exhibition. In addition to the plenary sessions there were over 70 technical sessions, with almost 350 presentations, and technical tours. The Working Week included the joint FIG/UN-HABITAT seminar on “*Improving Slum Conditions through Innovative Financing*”. The conference venue was the Stockholm City Conference Centre – Norra Latin and Folkets Hus – comfortably located within a walking distance to main attractions and venues.

Integrating Generations

FIG is a global organisation that aims to build bridges between ages, cultures and continents. Integrating the young generation is a key issue within FIG. This was demonstrated during the opening ceremony by the Swedish Minister for Environment **Andreas Carlgen** – who opened the conference together with **Carl-Olof Ternryd**, Honorary President of FIG and President of the FIG Council in 1977, when the conference was for the last time arranged in Sweden, and **Cecilia Lindén**, Chair of the FIG Working Group for Young Surveyors. The younger generation should not only give a new look to the FIG: their contribution will be most relevant in solving the issues of our time – where surveying is the backbone of society. In his speech Andreas Carlgen emphasised that in Sweden land and property underpin the economy. However, he said that in developing countries legal empowerment of the poor is required to support property ownership, and information systems are needed to stop us guessing. The Minister said: “*You (FIG) have such an important key role to play, to combat environmental threat, to combat poverty and slums and to support the development of this globe and its cities.*”

In his opening remarks Prof. **Stig Enemark**, FIG President said: “*We tied the ribbon between the generation that changed the world from analogue to digital and takes digital media for granted – but work needs to be done in many countries.*”

The cultural programme of the opening ceremony included traditional folk music and dances from Sweden performed by the representatives from *Skansen*, the famous outdoor museum in Stockholm, and musical entertainment performed by the music corps of the Dragoon’s Battalion of the Royal Guards. They played both melodies from ABBA and a new arrangement of the FIG Fanfare that was also recorded for future use.

Cooperation with UN-HABITAT

At the opening ceremony the keynote address was given by Dr. **Anna K. Tibaijuka**, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-HABITAT. In her speech she reminded the audience that the world is becoming more urban: *“Cities are not prepared to welcome and receive the new influx. The challenge, therefore, is to try to guide this urbanisation process. The urban poor are potentially capable of contributing 20 billion US dollars per year to improve their own living conditions. This would leave approximately 5 billion US dollars per year to be mobilised from other sources – currently this is only 2 billion US dollar.”*

According to Dr. Tibaijuka only some 10 percent of land parcels in the world are registered; in many areas, the poor’s land rights are based on customary rights that are not legally recognised, but are socially legitimate and only some 5 percent of registered land, is registered in a woman’s name. She noted that individual freehold titling is not always appropriate for a number of reasons including, the costs of adjudication, high technical standards, expensive registration and transfer fees, and literacy requirements. She observed that the development of new land tools, such as the FIG Land Administration Domain Model, will allow for the registration of customary forms of tenure and overlapping land rights and claims.

Dr. Tibaijuka announced that UN-HABITAT has a two-year agreement with Google to collaborate on new mapping tools using modern technologies. The FIG/UN-HABITAT Seminar *“Slum Upgrading through Innovative Financing Mechanisms”* discussed for two days the challenges and approaches that suit the poor; e.g. intermediate forms of title; gender sensitive title and incremental finance from group to project. Finance that is also attractive to banks where it reduces transaction costs and risk. Land markets should also work for the poor, using innovative planning instruments. A radical suggestion might be to create teams of young people to be mentored by different experts – a New Curriculum for Land Professionals: they will need to be adept at discussing and facilitating multi professional issues, and working with other professional groups. This integrated seminar experience will be forwarded to the 4th World Urban Forum in China November 2008.

The Joint FIG/UN-HABITAT Seminar attracted new delegates to the FIG Working Week broadening discussions from mere surveyors to multi-discipline dialogue between land professionals and economists.

Plenary sessions

The first plenary session following the opening ceremony was titled *“Sustainable Urban Development and the Millennium Development Goals”*. The keynote addresses were given by Minister Carlgren who talked about the environment and climate and the role of property and land administration institutions in society.

The second speaker was Dr. **Ashraf Ghani**, Chairman of the Institute for State Effectiveness (Afghanistan), who spoke about the legal empowerment in a globalizing world. The Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor published its report: *“Making the Law Work for Everyone”* with a four pillar approach on empowerment of the poor: access to justice and

the rule of law, property rights, labor rights and business rights. Dr. Ghani stated: “*The Land Professional can bring Information, Knowledge and Wisdom into Harmony*”.

President Enemark made his major contribution to the conference programme in this plenary session summarising and focussing on the partnership between FIG and the UN agencies in support of the Millennium Development Goals.

The second plenary session “*Land Administration and Finance Systems*“ was also organised jointly with the FIG/UN-HABITAT seminar. This session was chaired by **Lars Magnusson** and **Ann Jennervik**, focal persons together with **Bengt Kjellson** in organising this special seminar. The speakers in this sessions included **Michael Mutter**, from UN-HABITAT Slum Upgrading Facility, speaking about expanding the outreach of housing finance for the urban poor from co-operational point of view and **Renu Sud Karnad**, Joint Managing Director of the Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited – India telling about concepts of channelling financial flows for adequate and affordable housing. **Dan Ericsson**, State Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Sweden explained the Swedish engagement in land administration and housing finance. Dr. **Malcolm Childress**, Sr. Land Administration Specialist from the World Bank brought the World Bank vision to the discussion “*Land Finance through Land Governance—Expanding the Discussion of Land Policy during Food Crisis, Climate Change and Rapid Urbanization*”. This new view of world population growth was also demonstrated by President Enemark in his closing address. The contribution from the World Bank was an important and highly influential contribution to the conference.

Professional highlights

David Zilkoski from NOAA, USA identified in his presentation at the third plenary session that the new customers for our professional services are: emergency managers, planners and developers, insurance industry, agricultural industry, construction industry, environmental engineers, coastal managers, local governments, tribal governments, international organizations, academia, professional organizations and foreign counterparts.

In this plenary session, chaired by Vice President **Matt Higgins**, focussed on technical and organisational innovations, the other speakers were **Frank Udnaes** from the Galileo Unit of the European Commission giving an overview on the status of the European EGNOS and Galileo Programmes and **Stig Jönsson**, Director General of Lantmäteriet (National Land Survey of Sweden), discussing about building integrated land information systems and about development of NSDI by using Sweden as an example.

Sweden has taken the initiative for the construction of a national satellite imagery database for measurements over Sweden –Success. The satellite database was launched the week after the conference (24 June). Everyone can download satellite images of Sweden entirely free. Another interesting piece of information was that Nokia will increase the production of GPS supported mobiles to 35 million this year and within two-to-four years may be the biggest GNSS device producer, if Nokia's vision that up to 50% of handsets may be AGPS-capable (Michael Halbherr, Nokia Location Based Services) comes true.

Approximately 40 of the presented papers have been peer reviewed. Peer review was introduced because of the growing requirement for university staff to concentrate their submission of papers on conferences that offer a peer review process. Given that a significant

number of papers presented at FIG events are submitted by people from universities, it was decided that FIG needed to make that possibility available or risk losing a significant number of high quality authors. It was also recognised that many similar associations and professions are offering peer review of papers and that FIG needed to keep up with accepted normal practice. It was considered that the concept worked well in Stockholm and that the option for peer reviewed papers will be offered also at the incoming working weeks and congresses. There seemed to be a common opinion that the overall quality of the presented papers has increased and at the same time number of no-shows has decreased.

Professional development

In providing solutions to worldwide challenges the surveyors and land professionals can contribute from a broad perspective – this can easily be demonstrated by the focus of attention of FIG's 10 Commissions: Professional Practice; Professional Education; Spatial Information Management; Hydrography; Positioning and Measurement; Engineering Surveys; Cadastre and Land Management; Spatial Planning and Development; Valuation and the Management of Real Estate; and Construction Economics and Management.

Land Governance is the core area for surveyors and land professionals – land rights are political. Advocating pro poor systems requires cooperation with governments and politicians to develop the governmental side of land management. The profession has a key role to play here.

General Assembly

During the FIG 31st General Assembly, held at June 15th and 19th 2008 in Stockholm two new Vice Presidents and new Commission Chairs Elect were elected. The two new Vice Presidents are **Iain Greenway** from United Kingdom and **Teo CheeHai** from Malaysia. Both Vice Presidents are well known within the Federation and their contributions have always been highly appreciated – and the expectations for their term of office 2009 – 2012 are related to this. Vice Presidents **Paul van der Molen** and **Ken Allred** will leave the Council at the end of 2008.

The General Assembly elected and appointed Commission Chairs Elect for 2009-2010 are:

- Commission 1 **Leonie Newnham**, Australia
- Commission 2 Dr. **Steven Frank**, USA
- Commission 3 Prof. **Yerach Doytsher**, Israel
- Commission 4 Dr. **Michael Sutherland**, Canada
- Commission 5 **Mikael Lilje**, Sweden
- Commission 6 Dr. **Gethin Wyn Roberts**, UK
- Commission 7 **Daniel Roberge**, Canada
- Commission 9 Dr. **Frances Plimmer**, UK

The Commission Chairs Elect will become automatically Commission Chairs 2011–2014. More than fifty member associations participated and several new affiliate members were welcomed to the Federation.

Other major decisions of the General Assembly include the adoption of the new Statutes and Internal Rules of the Federation. The assembly also endorsed four new other publications:

- The FIG Work Plan 2007-2010. This includes the Council and Commission work plans for 2007-2010;
- Informal Settlements – the Road towards More Sustainable Places. The aim of this report is to explore how surveyors can be better prepared to work with international agencies, national and local governments in the area;
- FIG Guidelines on Capacity Assessment in Land Administration. This Guide, developed in cooperation with FAO, is offered as a tool for improving existing Land Administration Systems through in-county self assessment of the capacity needs, especially in developing and transition countries where the financial resources are limited;
- Costa Rica Declaration on Pro-Poor Coastal Zone Management. The coastal zones are fragile and include a range of rights and interests. FIG supports the right of poor coastal communities to thrive, and retain ongoing access to coastal resources.

The FIG Publications are worldwide recognised by professionals, academia, NGOs and organisations as UN-HABITAT, FAO and the World Bank in developing policies, profession and practise. More than forty high level publications can be downloaded on the FIG Website. Amongst the newest FIG Publications there is also ‘The FIG Profile’ which is the latest FIG brochure explaining the benefits of being an FIG member. The role of FIG, Commission activities, way of organisation, operation, financing and administration are explained. The FIG international cooperation is highlighted.

The General Assembly adopted two new member associations at its meeting:

- Geodetic Engineers of the Philippines, Inc
- Chamber of Graduate Surveyors from Bulgaria

Further nine new affiliate members were endorsed:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, United States Department of Commerce, USA
- Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency (Kadaster), the Netherlands
- Surveying Department, Dubai Municipality, United Arab Emirates
- National Land Survey of Finland (Maanmittauslaitos, MML), Finland
- National Survey and Cadastre (Kort og Matrikelstyrelse, KMS), Denmark
- National Land Survey of Sweden (Lantmäteriet, LM), Sweden
- General Directorate for Surveying, Ministry of Water Resources, Republic of Iraq
- Lao National Geographic Department, Lao PDR
- Siberian State Academy of Geodesy, Russian Federation

This brings the number of affiliate members to 28. The co-operation with national mapping and cadastre organisations was also strengthened by organising the Forum for chief executives of these organisations. These meetings will continue at the next FIG conferences.

In addition two new corporate members were endorsed: Derinsu Underwater Engineering Ltd., Turkey; and Al-Mutakamilad Real Estate (Cityplex), Jordan and one academic member admitted to membership: University of Novi Sad from Republic of Serbia.

Exhibition and technical tours

The Working Week was supported by several FIG corporate members both as sponsors and as exhibitors in the exhibition. The gold sponsors were ESRI and Trimble that also sponsored the FIG Foundation Dinner at the Vasa Museum. The local gold sponsors were the National Land Survey (Lantmäteriet) and Swedesurvey. They also contributed together with the ministries to the successful FIG/UN-HABITAT seminar. The exhibition was this time smaller than normally but the concept will be developed for the next conferences together with the corporate members. FIG is most grateful for its sponsors and corporate members for their continuous support.

Technical tours included a full-day visit to Gävle to learn from the National Land Survey and Swedesurvey. The other tours included an overview on planning in Stockholm waterfronts and visit to Trimble in Danderyd as well as to the Stockholm City Survey Department and to the Swedish Maritime Administration.

The history pre-conference workshop collected about 60 participants.

Social events

The social functions of the working week started with a welcome reception at the famous Stockholm City Hall hosted by the City of Stockholm and its Lord Mayor **Bo Bladholm**. The venue of the Nobel Prize Winner Dinner was also an excellent place to start the FIG Working Week.

The FIG Foundation Dinner gathered 300 participants to the Vasa Museum to see the royal flagship that sank on its maiden voyage in 1628 and that was raised from the depths of Stockholm harbour in 1961.

The Nordic speciality “*hemma hos*” gave a unique opportunity for international participants to go for a home visit and to get to know the Swedish surveyors and their way of living in different locations in Stockholm.

The gala dinner was arranged at the Vintergarden at the Grand Hotel, the hotel in Stockholm over a great dinner and music performances by the student choir of technological students.

The farewell reception was hosted by the FIG 2010 organising committee in the foyer of Norra Latin under the well-known Swedish paintings.

Summary statement

In his Closing Address Prof Stig Enemark spoke about the success of the conference. He recalled a Native American saying, used by Dr. Ashraf Ghani: “*We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children*”. He also referred to the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor published report: “*Making the Law Work for Everyone*” with

a four pillar approach on empowerment of the poor: access to justice and the rule of law, property rights, labor rights and business rights. When Dr Ashraf Ghani stated that the Land Professional can bring Information, Knowledge and Wisdom into Harmony, that is where, as Prof Enemark said, the ‘golden medals’ of the profession’s contribution to Land Administration appear: mapping, planning, property and land rights (security of tenure), cadastral services, valuation (most relevant for self supporting local governments), and financial services. This represents a bundle of interests from the perspective of government.

President Enemark repeated that FIG is strongly committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UN-HABITAT agenda on the Global Land Tool Network. UN agencies have access to national governments and to setting a global agenda, but UN agencies will often depend on interest groups and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) for implementing this agenda. Global partnerships will establish the link that drives development for achieving the global agenda such as the MDGs. This agenda includes the big challenges of the new millennium: climate change, food shortage, energy scarcity, urban growth, environmental degradation and natural disasters. All these issues relate to governance and management of land. Land governance and management is a core area for surveyors – the Land Professionals. It will require:

- High level geodesy models to predict future change
- Modern surveying and mapping tools to support management and implementation
- Spatial data infrastructures to support decision making on the natural and built environment
- Secure tenure systems
- Sustainable systems for land valuation, land use management and land development
- Systems for transparency and good governance

President Enemark concluded that we must mobilise the next generation of Land Professionals. “We must continue to develop innovative and transitional solutions to address global inequality in land and property ownership and tenure. We can act as Professional Facilitators – we can ‘Fly High’ and we are providing the underlying data to enable monitoring and support decision making for sustainable development.”

Finally President Enemark thanked our Swedish colleagues under the excellent chairmanship of Conference Director **Svante Astermo**, and the support of the National Land Survey of Sweden (Lantmäteriet) and Swedesurvey . The next FIG Working Week will be held in Eilat, Israel, 3-8 May 2009.

Markku Villikka, Rob Mahoney (United Kingdom) and Christiaan Lemmen (The Netherlands)