

“Having Ice in the stomach” or 22 years of FIG by FIG-President Rudolf Staiger

Introductory explanation

On the last day of the Intergeo Exhibition + Congress 2022 my home association DVW e.V. - German Association for Geodesy, Geoinformation and Land Management invited for a hand over meeting to the next FIG-President Diane Dumashie. At this occasion I had the opportunity to give a farewell speech. The following shares with you the main thoughts of this speech.

First part of my speech

The first part was a personal journey through my 24 years of FIG-activities with many photos, describing also the different stations. It started 1998 with a publication for the FIG-Congress in Brighton (UK) together with Wolfgang Huet. The paper with the title „Measuring device checks and advanced surveying equipment – a contribution to quality control” was clearly allocated to Commission 5.

In 2000 I attended my first FIG event in Malta. The seminar with the title “The Mediterranean Surveyor in the New Millennium” was organised by the FIG Commissions 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7. The Chair of Commission 5 Jean-Marie Becker was responsible for the technical program. Chief of the local organization was Randolph Camilleri who was and still is the president of the Surveyors of Malta. Since then people say that this seminar was the very first FIG Regional Conference. In the following years I held various positions (Tab. 1)

Years	Position
2003-2006	Working group Chair 5.1: Standards and Calibration
2007-2010	Chair of Commission 5: “Positioning and Measurement
2009-2010	Chief Editor of the Peer-Review-System for the Congress 2010, Sydney (Australia)
2011-2014	Vice President 1 st term of office
2015-2018	Vice President 2 nd term of office
2019-2022	President

Since 2005 I attended all official FIG events (Fig. 1).

<i>I attended ...</i>			14 working weeks		
6 Congresses			2021	e-WW	NL
2022	Warsaw	Poland	2019	Hanoi	Vietnam
2018	Istanbul	Turkiye	2017	Helsinki	Finland
2014	KL	Malaysia	2016	Christchurch	NZ
2010	Sydney	Australia	2015	Sofia	Bulgaria
2006	Munich	Germany	2013	Abuja	Nigeria
2002	Washington D.C.	USA	2012	Rome	Italy
5 Regional Conferences			2011	Marrakesh	Morocco
2012	Montevideo	Uruguay	2009	Eilat	Israel
2009	Hanoi	Vietnam	2008	Stockholm	Sweden
2007	San Jose	Costa Rica	2007	Hongkong	Hongkong
2006	Accra	Ghana	2005	Kairo	Egypt
2003	Marrakesh	Morocco	2004	Athens	Greece
			2003	Paris	France

Fig. 1: Official FIG-events since 2002 attended by Rudolf Staiger

Since the outbreak of the COVID19-pandemic everything changed in a radical and unexpected way:

- I became the 1st virtual FIG-President (Fig. 2).
- I spent at least 8 hours per week in online Conferences (Fig. 3)
- compared to my predecessors, I left the smallest Carbon foot print ever!



Fig. 2: The 1st virtual FIG-President, together with FIG-Director Louise Friis-Hansen

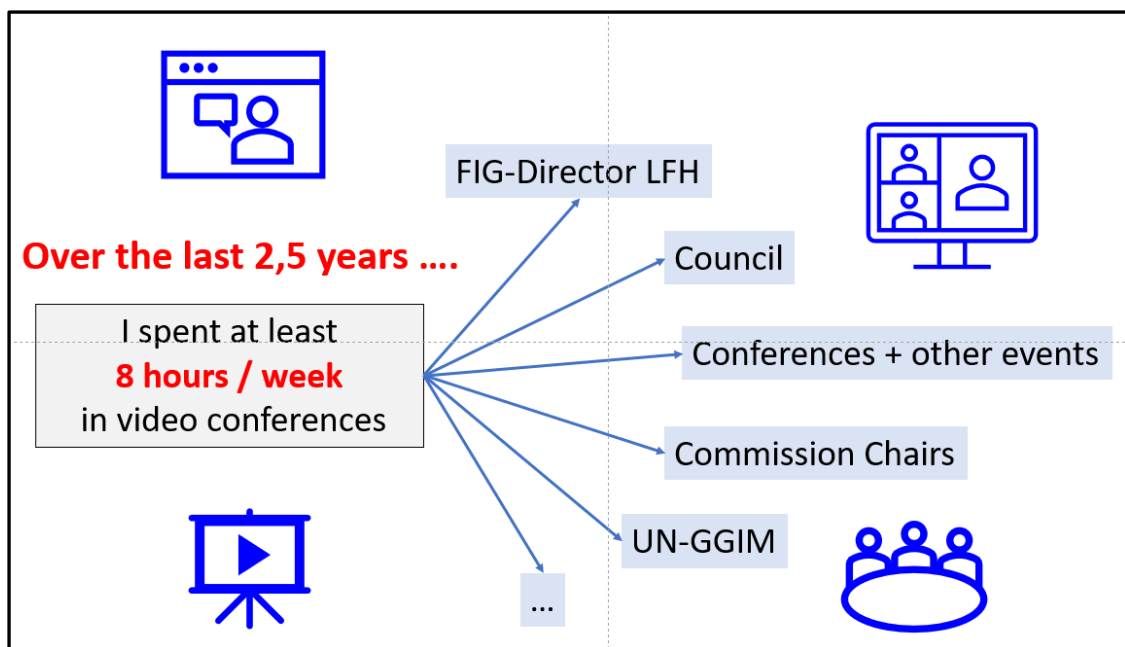


Fig. 3: Virtual activities over the last 2,5 years

The first part ended with the explanations of the main three tasks of FIG (Fig. 4).

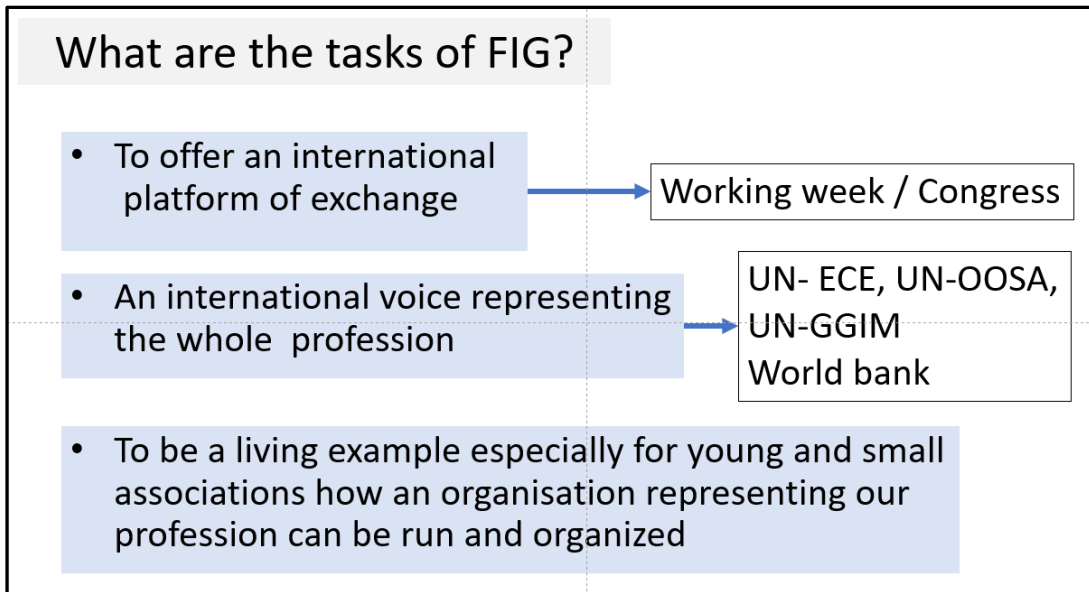


Fig. 4: The three main tasks of the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG)

Second part of my speech

The second part of my speech was focussing on one main question: "Why are we volunteering?" In order to give you a real impression what was exactly said, here is my manuscript literally:

What is the motivation for...

- * *participating in 25 FIG events over more than 20 years?*
- * *volunteering in a variety of positions?*
- * *spending 8 hours per week in video conferences for the federation?*

There are several reasons and honestly you can only answer this type of question in retrospective.

The last 10 years especially in and with FIG convinced me that volunteering is needed and useful for FIG but at the same time it offers also personal satisfaction for yourself.

In my first years in FIG the thematic exchange with the colleagues esp. in C5 was the main driver. Later as a senior officer the activities shifted more to the management and organisation of our federation. Both is interesting and challenging as well.

Today I know that my activities in FIG brought me joy but furthermore it sharpened my knowledge, it enlarged my horizon, brought new experiences and it shaped the personality I am today. Thank you for this FIG!

Being active in FIG means also that you can and have to learn lessons on a more or less continuous base. Please allow me to share 2 lessons with you that I have learned recently. Both with a serious background.

1. *HAVING ICE IN THE STOMACH? This is not a new cocktail recipe, NO. When we had the COVID outbreak beginning of March 2020 it became obvious by the end of March that we have to cancel the working week scheduled for June! But we could not just do so, because we had a*

contract with the RAI-venue in Amsterdam, saying that in this case we have to pay around 180 000 €. For no counter value. At that moment our Director Louise taught us (Council + LOC) a Danish Proverb “having Ice in the Stomach” which means STAY COOL AND WAIT. And Council and LOC did so. Participants had booked already flights and accommodation but unfortunately we could not officially announce a cancellation because than the bill would have been send immediately So we kept ICE IN OUR STOMACHs until the Dutch government declared that events in the size of the working week are forbidden in that period (24th of April). One day later we could announce the cancellation and avoided the mentioned payment. Since than (in times of difficult discussion) this saying is common and known to all of us.

Second lesson is a similar serious issue but with a tragic background

- 2. The statutes of FIG are clear. FIG is a politically and ethically neutral organisation. Period. We knew this since long time. But this was not important until the publication of our statement regarding Ukraine earlier this year.*

What is the lesson we can learn here? A truly global federation like FIG can only exist over a long period like almost 150 years when a strictly neutral course is driven!

This means for all of us (not only the president!) who are acting or speaking on behalf of FIG have to become in a situation like the current one SPLIT personalities more precise a double personality

The FIG-half in us must be strictly neutral, while the private half can and probably should have clear political or ethical positions on local national and international questions or issues.

The real lesson I learnt here is: “To accept that we have here two personalities namely a FIG-personality and a private one”. And once we have agreed to this especially that there is a co-existence rather than a contradiction between our two halves live becomes easier.

Let me conclude: The big ship FIG has proofed in this heavy times to be robust and weather proofed! I am a little bit proud that my steering contributed to this.

Often people talk about FIG-family. I felt this FIG-family already in the early days of my attendance and I always liked to be part of it. FIG offered me an enlargement of my mental and cultural horizon. I met and I still meet wonderful people. Thank you for this.

Dear Diane, I congratulate you on your election as the next president. You have certainly the capabilities to run the show better than I did. I wish you dedication, positive energy, wise decisions and not to forget also fun!

I thank my esteemed Council members, all Commission Chairs (outgoing and incoming) and our director Louise with the entire crew in Copenhagen for your valuable support.

With this I close my speech and thank all of you for coming and for your attention.

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Rudolf Staiger
FIG-President
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