

FIG 2013 Working Week, 4th – 11th May 2013, Abuja Nigeria
with the theme “Environment for Sustainability”
OPENING CEREMONY
Opening Address of CheeHai TEO
President, Fédération Internationale des Géomètres (FIG)

On behalf of all participants at FIG’s 2013 Working Week, I like to thank the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan and his Government for the patronage, sponsorship and support at this year’s global forum for surveyors from around world. FIG also wishes to thank His Excellency and His Government for the various arrangements to assure the safety and security of all our participants this week.

Please convey to your President the well wishes of FIG and all participants here in Abuja this week our appreciation and gratefulness for his patronage and support. FIG also wishes to thank you, as the Honorable Federal Minister of Works, for your personal attention, support and encouragement that has resulted in the most well attended Working Week in the history of FIG.

The Federation is 135 years old this year, represents a membership from over 120 countries throughout the world. As a United Nations and the World Bank Group recognized non-governmental organization, FIG seeks to collaborate and to ensure that the disciplines of surveying and all who practise them are relevant and meeting the needs of both the community and the market we are present.

This worldwide professional community measures, estimates, costs, values, assesses, collects, process, models, maps, reports, prepare contracts, plans and manages the natural and built environment for the effective planning, efficient administration and responsible governance of the land, the seas and its natural resources and any structures thereon.

FIG continues to provide the global forum for professionals, practitioners and partners as we seek to serve the policies, the places, and the people together. This 2013 Working Week once again bring together participants from different cultures, from diverse surveying traditions and varying professional experiences. We have in excess of 250 papers and presentations including peer-reviewed papers, academic, technical and practical papers and presentations from over 50 countries. In addition to keynote plenary presentations, there are high level segments and roundtables plus training-of-trainers workshop together with our partners, notably UN-Habitat, Global Land Tool Network and The World Bank.

This Working Week, with the theme “Environment for Sustainability”, is very appropriate at this juncture. The Profession recognizes that we are operating within a complex but interconnected and interdependent environment, where we, as a Profession must engage societal, environmental, economic and political realities as the Profession seeks to extend the use and usefulness of surveying towards the betterment of humanity. Our professional community is endowed with great sciences, technologies and practices, as well as great minds and practitioners. When conscientiously collaborating and contributing in synergistic manner, there can be this environment for sustainability, particularly for the Profession.

The Working Week in Abuja provides opportunities for all participants, both local and foreign, to engage and exchange, to discuss and debate, to interact and inspire, particularly on current developments and contributions that will allow our Profession to be continually armed with knowledge and best practices, extending the use and usefulness of surveying towards the betterment of society, environment and economy, to strive for this environment for sustainability, not only for the profession but for the nation and its citizens.

Within the context of nation building, national development and economic resilience, there have been references to surveying and mapping approaches that has at times hindered rather than contributed. Today, the advances in number, types and capacities of platforms and sensors, together with a suite of appropriate and affordable tools and approaches and with the emergence of reliable volunteered information, provides a spectrum of possibilities and opportunities. Surveying and mapping should no longer be a hindrance to better and more responsible governance.

Thank you for your presence here this morning. I also thanked all participants for making the effort to be here this week, who has come from near and far. I would also like to acknowledge the invaluable partnership and participation, support and sponsorship of the United Nations Human Settlement Program, The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, The World Bank, Global Land Tool Network, the Federal Ministry of Works, the Federal Capital Territory Administration, the Office of the Surveyor General of the Federation, the Surveyor Council of Nigeria, Working Week Platinum Sponsors, Trimble Navigation and ESRI.

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