

## **ABOUT SURVEYOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO A FREE AND VITAL SOCIETY AND ECONOMY \***

**Opening Keynote Speech at UN/ECE - Committee on Human Settlements WPLA-Workshop:  
“Spatial Information Management for Sustainable Real Estate Market - Best Practice Guidelines  
on nation-wide Land Administration”  
Athens, Greece, May 29, 2003**

Honourable representatives of the Greek host organisations and of UNECE,  
Dear chair of WPLA,  
Dear friends and colleagues,

FIG is strongly interested in the work and politics of UN-Institutions and UNECE WPLA and therefore I am going on to continue the successful policy of my predecessors P. Dale and B. Foster. I am glad having been invited to this important European event.

### **Athens was always a meeting place for bridging different cultures**

“Who is not aware of the past cannot cope with the future”. That is why we should concern ourselves as much with the history of our worldwide profession as with what we have achieved and with the present situation, and above all with the challenges we are facing. This was my message recently at the 125<sup>th</sup> FIG anniversary in Paris!

In ancient time Greek culture was famous for building bridges between east and west, north and south. These bridges had not only functions of connecting different social, cultural, political and ethnical cells but also had an practical function which is proved by the Greek tradition in surveying. The Greeks and the Romans are famous for the heroic engineering of their aqueducts, tunnels and roads.

The early Greek philosophers developed the science of geometry. Heron stands out prominently for applying science to surveying as early as 120 B.C. He was the author of several important thesis of interest to surveyors, including a description of surveying equipments like the *Dioptra*, which related to the methods of surveying a field, drawing a plan, and making calculations. For many years Heron's work was the most authoritative among Greek and Egyptian surveyors.

History records that again the Greek Eratosthenes about 220 B.C. determined the true size and the shape of the earth. He ascertained the angle subtending the meridian arc between Syene and Alexandria in Egypt by measuring cast shadows by the sun at these cities.

What I would like to express with this history: Greece is always an inspiring place for surveyors and – for all Europeans!

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\* I would like to thank very much FIG commission 3 chair Gerhard Muggenhuber for most valuable contributions to this keynote speech.

The most recent evidence of Greece having a bridging role was not only the introduction of the Greek € as a symbol for the Euro but also the EU-Welcome-Ceremony for the EU-Candidates close to the Acropolis in spring 2003. And Athens has a bridging role even between three generations of FIG presidents as it happens at this workshop.

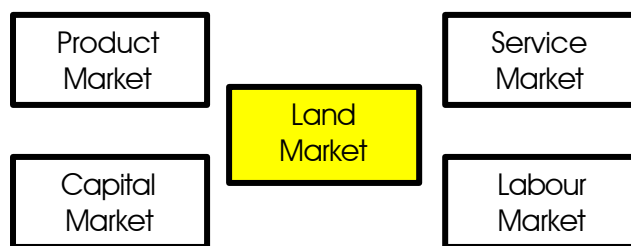
### **Successful Land Administration – a bridging role for disciplines and professions**

This workshop serves also as a bridge between surveying and legal profession. The Working Party on Land Administration is one of the few organizations in Europe bringing different professions together for one joint topic: “Administration and Management of Land and Real Estate”.

According to the “Bathurst-Declaration” and the FIG-publication “Land Information Management for Sustainable Development of Cities” “a sound Land Administration” is highlighted “as a tool for sustainable development”. Sustainable development is closely linked with and based on sustainable Land and Resource Management.

### **Resource management as prerequisite for sustainable development**

In history and still today the development of a society was always linked with increasing demand on resources. Now the new challenge is to shape the demand on resources in a more sustainable way. We shouldn't forget this in the field of economy as well. The traditional cooperation within the European Community focuses on a Free Market and the *'four freedoms'*, that is, free movement of *persons, goods* (products and land), *services* and *capital* across borders. Thus the EU considers a tuned approach of the following parameters as essential for improving an economic development: Product Market, Service Market, Capital Market, Labour Market and last but not least Land Market. Improvements of these parameters are also reflected in the cooperation with candidate countries or countries of partnership.



Pillars for economic development

### **A bridging role between General Public and professions**

Surveyors always have been deeply involved in economic development. Their contributions are widespread. But we should consider: The business of surveying, mapping, registration of land or land use planning and land management is a team oriented business. It requires cooperation within the surveying profession as well as cooperation especially between the professions of lawyers and surveyors. First of all our profession has to build bridges to the General Public. A profession has to look for a sustainable contribution to the society instead of a “quick win”. Only those products and services which really serve the customers or public demand will justify the

long lasting existence of our profession. Therefore FIG has worked out and published an own FIG Agenda 21.

And: only those professions which contribute to a further improvement of a society are developing much better than other which are reluctant to changes. Therefore the motto of the current FIG-Council is “*Shaping the Change*”. All of us are contributing to an ecological, economic, social and cultural improvement of our society. We feel committed to a more sustainable and more equitable world. The customers and the public shall feel the benefit from our service - and they shall know about it.

### **Land Administration for Implementation of UN Millennium Goals**

We all, the partners contributing to a sound Land Administration in our countries, are responsible for providing a service which fits to the demand. Therefore we need a better understanding of our customers needs. Best practices learnt from Land Administration activities in each of our countries have to be compiled. Exemplary, brief descriptions of projects might be added for further illustration and awareness creation. FIG has contributed in the past to development of Land Administration with publications like “*Cadastrre 2014*”, “*Cadastral Benchmarking*” and “*Best Practice Guidelines in City-wide Land Information Management*”

FIG and its 10 commissions will continue this way by coming up with a “*Good Practice Report*” at the end of the current period.

FIG feels a moral and ethical obligation to make special contributions to more democracy, more urban and rural good governance, more secure tenure, more decentralisation, more poverty reduction, more sustainability and so forth. We from the professions of Land Administrators and Land Management experts shall therefore feel ourselves committed to the UN Millennium Declaration and to the concrete Millennium Development goals. *Good Land Administration, Land Management and sustainable Real Estate Markets are indispensable contributions to a free, democratic and vital society and economy.*

The FIG aims, as an unchanged target, the promotion of the profession of surveyors in present and future FIG member countries. In this context FIG intends to ensure a fair balance between employment in the public service and private practice, even in the field of Land Administration and Land Management.

### **Changing role of surveyors**

In the past dramatically changes in our geodata business resulted mainly from technological innovations. In the meantime however changes are more and more caused by improved business processes with a severe impact on our surveying business. Some of our customers and even some partners like National Mapping Agencies started innovative Reorganization Processes, which has some drawbacks and which I have experienced myself during my time as director general of the Bavarian rural development service:

1. Reorganization takes time and resources – during that time customer contacts are weakened.
2. The renewed organization may again not fit because the business world is under a continuous changing process.

Even running faster the traditional change script *does not work*. To react on increased business pressure by organizational changes is often the wrong way. The most dynamic companies shift

*business models* without organizational changes. Instead of shifting organizational blocks we have to shift *mindsets*!

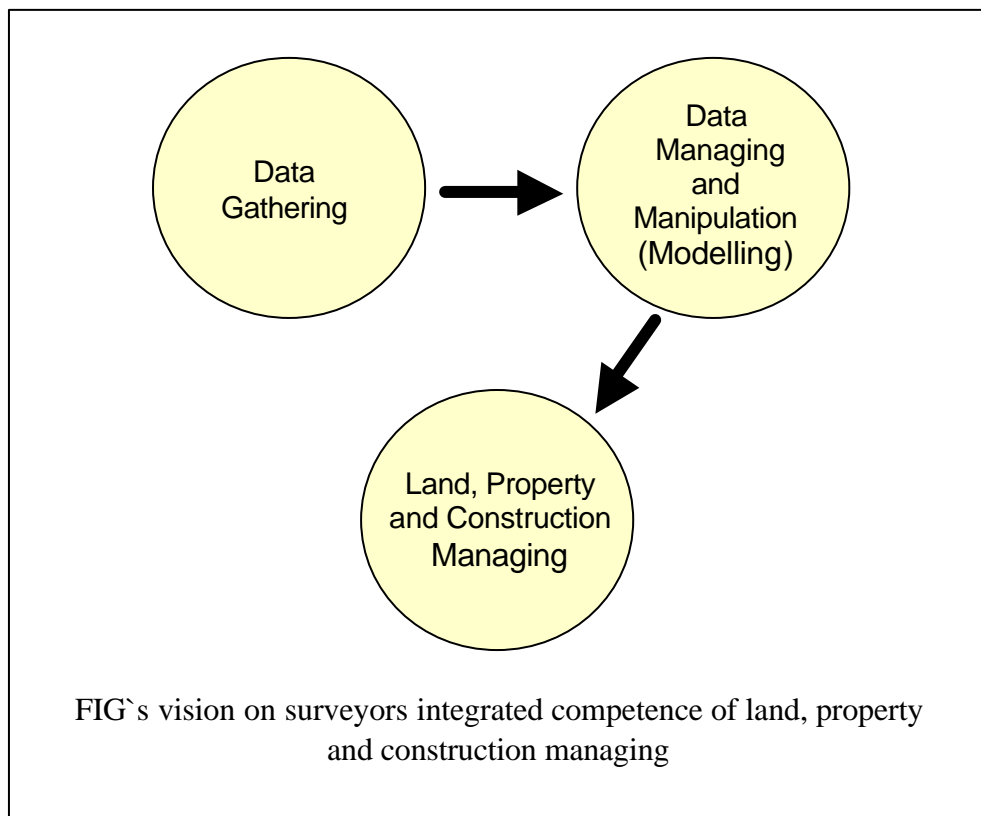
Some decades ago the strong position of surveyors with almost a monopoly in geometric data acquisition and survey engineering was mainly based on technology and knowledge – technological innovation combined with highly skilled experts.

In the meantime the technology is used by a wide user community. Geodata are more detailed in their “thematic resolution” and so the required knowledge for geodata assessment shifted from geometric issues to thematic issues. This had the consequence that many other disciplines like geographers, (landscape) planners, agricultural engineers etc. are involved in the GIS-Work too and appeared more and more dominant in this field.

But nevertheless surveyors are needed more than ever. The merge of global geodata requires well-based knowledge about coordinate systems and map projections and about the background of their need.

In the future *four additional main activities* have to be realized by professional surveyors in the field of “Spatial Data Management”: (1) *Specialist and Coordinator* of the workflow for geodata sets , (2) *Information Manager* (including database and web information) (3) *Quality Manager* (QM) for geodata and (4) *Expert in consulting and support* for integrating business data, thematic data and geodata across different professions for generating “*geoinformation for decision making*”.

Or with other words: Once having started with “data gathering” surveyors have moved on to “data modelling” and now we strongly should go toward the “integrated competence of land, property and construction managing”.



To do this in a professional way and successful manner we naturally have to intensively cooperate with neighbour disciplines and professions like lawyers, land economists and many other disciplines. But first of all we must start with our own future oriented education and training to better understand our partners as well as to play an efficient role by ourselves. This means that our surveyors education at universities and schools must be more broadened comprising the whole wide range of surveyors activities. At my own university our ideal is as following: offering an academic education in all fields starting from the single parcel of land even up to the planet mars. Look at the latest hopeful decisions on starting an own European Galileo-Program. And our second ideal for young surveyors education is getting “well grounded specialized generalists”.

I know that it is very hard to implement these ideals at the universities all over the world but I am deeply convinced of its necessity; otherwise we would risk – and there is already partly a concrete danger – that surveyors education would disappear from the academic scene. The consequences for the image and practical situation of surveyors would be awful. This never would happen with the lawyers. Unfortunately we even in Europe don't have everywhere such a comprehensive surveyors education. It is one of the most important goals of the current FIG-council to better contact and come together with those academic colleagues at our universities who up to now are not integrated or interested enough in FIG. The first step on this approach will be a revision of our FIG definition of surveyors.

I am really very concerned that we must better bridge the academic and the world of practitioners and politicians, otherwise we risk that the academic based profession of surveying or geomatics becomes more and more split and finally it will perish. On the background of my former position at a state ministry I point out again: FIG must stop this trend by bringing together all parties and I am sure: all parties will finally benefit!

### **A global hot issue: Urban – rural interrelationship**

Let me close with a short remark on a very essential issue: Up to now I see too often single sided approaches which are not considering the demand of the population. What is it worth to have only urban solutions but not cooperating with rural ones? What is the worth to have only vibrant megacities but empty or aged villages and rural areas with continuing brain drain? Functioning Land markets must happen also in rural areas – therefore it is in the interest of all to get economic powerful and vital rural areas too. This is the position of EU and all candidate countries as it was postulated by the Greek presidency at the 19<sup>th</sup> session of UN Governing council in Nairobi 3 weeks ago. FIG strongly supports the politics, philosophy and measures of getting closer urban-rural-interrelationships. We are willing and able to deliver important contributions by our 10 commissions. We are going to demonstrate this at our second FIG Regional conference in Marrakech, Morocco, December 2003 again on the topic “urban-rural-interrelationship for sustainable environment”. We want to demonstrate that we are not only experts of the more classic fields of surveying, registration, mapping and administration, but also experts for participatory urban and rural planning, construction, land management including GIS, valuation, land readjustment, conflict solution, mediation and real estate and land markets. We therefore must go on improving our image and messages. Our goal is the aforementioned idea or vision of an integrated competence as it very often was postulated by our former FIG vice president Tom Kennie! I think that we need a lot of such an integrated competence for our contributions to sustainable Real Estate markets as well.

The paradigm of European holistic policy for both urban and rural areas could be a model for the world. That is what I recently have postulated at the parallel event ‘About the future of cities’ of

the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council in Nairobi. Many surveyors successfully have contributed to this paradigm.

The growing Metropolitan City of Athens demonstrates the need of mutually benefiting urban-rural interrelationships. In order to ensure a sustainable good quality of life it surely needs for example

- a long term strategic planning of city development including the peri-urban and rural surroundings
- integrated land administration and land management,
- strategic thinking and actions as well as orientation on effectiveness
- new distribution of functions between state, local authorities, economy and citizens in the context of an emerging “Civil Society” and the new paradigm “City for Citizens” etc.

A lot of experts is needed to support these policies and measures, surveyors and lawyers in the first rows.

A good cooperation of lawyers and surveyors on proper tools for Administration, Management and Marketing of Spatial Data and Land and Real Estate is in my opinion an essence for a sustainable society in urban and rural areas.

In this sense I wish this workshop to become a great success for all countries of “Old” and “New” Europe.

I would be very happy to welcome some or better most of you again to our Working Week 2004 in this wonderful city, the inspiring cradle of at least our European culture.