



Dancers at the opening ceremony showing some of the best traditions from Bulgaria

FROM THE WISDOM OF THE AGES TO CHALLENGES OF THE MODERN WORLD

FIG WORKING WEEK 2015 WAS HELD 17-21 MAY IN SOFIA, BULGARIA AND ATTRACTED AROUND 900 PARTICIPANTS FROM 70 COUNTRIES

This year's FIG Working Week had the theme 'From the wisdom of the ages to challenges of the modern world'. The latest innovations and developments were discussed and more than 320 papers were presented in three plenary sessions, 67 technical sessions, five joint UN-Habitat/GLTN-FIG sessions, and a UN-Habitat/GLTN-FIG workshop.

The plenary sessions ranged from surveyors' response to changing city management, through pro-growth land management to global and regional professional and institutional reforms. Among the speakers were Professor Emeritus Dr Armin Gruen, of the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich, who spoke about the next generation of smart cities and the role of geomatics. A series of new tools is available for documentation, analysis and dissemination of environmental data. A multi-sensor, multi-resolution approach helps in getting results of better quality, completeness, and greater levels of automation and new concepts for 3D mapping/modelling are required.

2015-2016 is International Map Year and Georg Gardner, president of ICA, talked about the importance of maps now and in the future with the use of 3D and 4D visualisation. It is necessary to promote information advocacy and awareness from a data-centric 'provider' focus to a knowledge-enabled 'user' focus and to find a future direction for data creation, maintenance and management as well as the use of Big Data. Trends in technology include that sensors will be pervasive, data increasingly interconnected and there will be emerging relevance of providing relevant data.

Daniel Roberge of the World Bank talked about the forces shaping the land agenda: growing prosperity, urbanisation, food production, rising demand for land and climate change. Accurate information about land, people and resources is needed. This requires transparent and inclusive institutions, and cadastral infrastructure is essential to deal with these challenges.



Angel Yanakiev of the Bulgarian Chamber of Surveyors hands the FIG flag to the organisers of the FIG Working Week 2016, Jeff Needham from the New Zealand Institution of Surveyors



The FIG Council as the FIG fanfare was played to open the General Assembly and Working Week

Dr Clarissa Agustinus of the Global Land Tool Network, UN-Habitat, highlighted the need for land administration reform for pro-growth land management and Dr Ionut Savoiu, a member of the Romanian parliament, talked about the challenging role of surveyors in the land-management issues related to growing economies. Land consolidation was one of the key issues.

Bengt Kjellson focused on global geospatial information management from a global and a regional perspective and the importance of the fact that UN-GGIM has decided to form regional bodies. UN-GGIM is a global initiative and its role is to make accurate, reliable and authoritative geospatial information readily available to support national, regional and global development.

It is, however, also important to be able to act regionally and the aim of UN-GGIM-Europe is to identify European issues relevant to geospatial information management, recommend necessary actions. It also tries to ensure that the national mapping and cadastral authorities and national statistical institutes in the European UN member states, European institutions and associated bodies work together to contribute to the more effective management and availability of geospatial information in Europe, and its integration with other information, based on user needs and requirements.

Sessions and activities

The Working Week took place a short time after the dramatic earthquake in Nepal and surrounding countries, which meant that the effects of an earthquake were very visible, as were the challenges for surveyors in measuring our planet. In situ scanners achieve a greater precision. Vertical and horizontal reference frames develop to a global



Young surveyors organised a session, 'Mapping for Nepal', where participants used their computers to assist those in Nepal in need

level as the foundation for global data infrastructures, while locally, crowdsourcing and public involvement are the subject of debate: what is the role of the professional in the future when easy-to-use, handheld measurement devices will be increasingly available?

In any case, participation will increase and substantially support the development of land administration worldwide, including the marine environment. 3D modelling for cadastre is under development. Ethics in relation to our profession is also under continuous attention.

The FIG Young Surveyors Network organised a 'Mapping response – contributions for Nepal'. Participants joined with their laptops to the already established Open Street Map initiative to map Nepal.

FIG president Chryssy Potsiou said: "FIG has a long-term commitment to support the global campaign for security of tenure for all and will endeavour to solve these land issues through partnerships. FIG, as a recognised NGO, will work closely with the global family of UN organisations to support solutions to the 21st century global challenges of climate change, food security, social justice, and urbanisation."

Future ambitions

The ambitions of the new FIG leadership and president are clear: FIG has a long-term commitment to the global agenda. This Working Week was Potsiou's first and marked a successful performance to the FIG community. She underlined that FIG will work with its member associations to support the implementation of UN FAO's 'Voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security' and UN Habitat's 'continuum of land rights'.

FIG will work with UN-GGIM in its mandate to include land administration activities in the domain of global information management.

Scalability of security of tenure solutions will involve the use of a network of grassroots surveyors from the communities. FIG will embrace and manage the change to encourage the use of innovative, scalable approaches to recording and securing land rights, including informal and customary rights. This will include fit-for-purpose land administration and property valuation solutions.

FIG also supports ideas for the development of a new generation of global surveyors working locally. Global surveyors are aware of global issues and contribute solutions to the global agenda. They should be able to identify, initiate and foster research and develop a clear professional and scientific vision.

FIG HAS A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO THE GLOBAL AGENDA

Louise Friis-Hansen is FIG manager (www.fig.net)