

**Report to the 27<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
in Athens, 23-27 May 2004**

**Co-operation with the United Nations and Its Agencies  
April 2003–May 2004**

**1. General**

The FIG has an active and long standing relationship with a wide range of United Nations agencies including the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), the World Trade Organization (WTO), UNESCO, the World Bank and a range of regional United Nations organizations like the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (and its Working Party on Land Administration), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, as well as United Nations sponsored organizations such as the Permanent Committee for GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific (PCGIAP), the Permanent Committee on SDI for the Americas (PC-IDEA).

**2. UN Co-operation Network**

After Prof. Ian Williamson finished his task as the Director FIG/UN Liaison to coordinate and develop the co-operation between FIG and different UN bodies at the end of 2002, the Council decided to give the UN relations top priority on the FIG agenda and therefore it decided to establish a UN Co-operation Network under the chairmanship of President Magel. The members of this network are Stig Enemark (Denmark), Gerhard Muggenhuber (Austria), Matt Higgins (Australia) and Willi Zimmermann (Germany/Cambodia).

**3. Agreements and administrative issues**

The long-term co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – FIG has been recognized by the UNEP as a Civil Society partner already in 1989 – has now been intensified to a more concrete level. After discussions between President Holger Magel and Dr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP, UNEP appointed Mr. Svein Tveitdal as the new focal point for FIG Co-operation in August 2003. Mr. Tveitdal is Head of the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), which is in charge of the disaster management and capacity building in UNEP. When attending the FIG Regional Conference in Marrakech as a keynote speaker, Mr. Tveitdal expressed the interest of UNEP to go deeper into co-operation with FIG e.g. on projects related to risk and disaster management. It has been agreed that the start for this intensified co-operation could be built on the FIG Working Group 8.4 on risk management. The representative of UNEP will also be present in the Working Week in Athens as one of the keynote speakers. The co-operation with UNEP has thus already proceeded beyond normal MoU.

The other UN agency with which FIG has managed to make close links is the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (UN OOSA) in Vienna. Matt Higgins attended the United Nations/United States of America International Workshop on the Use and Applications of Global Navigation

Satellite Systems in Vienna 8-12 December 2003. This visit has resulted in an invitation for FIG to appoint a representative to the UN Action Team on GNSS. The representative of OOSA will further attend the FIG Working Week in Athens as a keynote speaker and to discuss further co-operation between UN OOSA and FIG and possibility for more formalised co-operation.

FIG is a member of Habitat Professionals Forum and in the Joint Board of Spatial Information Societies whose one main goal is to be a focal point to the United Nations on geoinformatics topics.

#### **4. Activities in 2003**

##### 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council, Nairobi, Kenya, 4-9 May 2003

FIG President Holger Magel attended the 19th Session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council in Nairobi 4-9 May, 2003. The session was the first one after UN-Habitat was upgraded to a UN Programme. President Magel gave a keynote speech – as representative of FIG and the Professionals Forum – on a parallel event “The Future of Cities”. In addition he made two contributions in the meetings of the Committee of the whole on the topic “the rural dimension of sustainable urban development”. He also managed to meet all key persons at the UN-Habitat including Dr. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director, Mr Daniel Biau, Deputy Executive Director and Mr Don Okpala, current focal point for FIG as well as Mr. Farouk Tebbal and newly appointed Dr. Clarissa Augustinus from the tenure unit.

##### ECA CODI III in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12-16 May 2003

Dr. Reinfried Mansberger, Vice-Chair of Administration of FIG Commission 3, presented FIG as an observer at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI) of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN/ECA) at UN Conference Centre, Addis Ababa May 12-16, 2003. Reinfried Mansberger presented a paper in a plenary session with the title “Geoinformation to Support Decentralization and Community Empowerment”. He also participated in a pre-conference symposium on “Establishing Permanent Committee on SDI, incorporating AFREF (African Geodetic Reference Frame)” and attended all plenary sessions and the sessions of the Subcommittee “Geoinformation”. This subcommittee session was attended by delegates from 23 African member states and by 40 observers.

##### UN ECE WPLA Workshop in Athens, Greece, 29-31 May 2003

President Magel attended and gave an opening keynote speech at the UN / ECE Committee on Human Settlements WPLA Workshop “Spatial Information Management for Sustainable Real Estate Market – Best Practice Guidelines on nation-wide Land Administration”. His presentation was about surveyor’s contribution to a free and vital society and economy.

##### ECOSOC High Level Segment 2003, Geneva, Switzerland, 30 June 2003

President Magel attended the Ministerial Round Table on *Urban-Rural Interface and Slums* at the ECOSOC High Level Segment 2003 in Geneva June 30, 2003. This Round Table was part of the programme of the ECOSOC High Level Segment 2003 and organised by UN-HABITAT. It was chaired by H.E., Dr. Ivan Simonovic, Deputy Foreign Minister of Croatia and co-chaired by Ms. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT.

United Nations/United States of America International Workshop on the Use and Applications of Global Navigation Satellite Systems, 8-12 December 2003, Vienna, Austria

Matt Higgins, Chair of Commission 5 attended the UN/USA International Workshop on the Use and Applications of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) that was held from 8 to 12 December 2003 at the United Nations Office at Vienna, Austria. The event was convened as a Joint Meeting of the UN Action Team on GNSS and GNSS experts who attended UN/USA Regional Workshops and the International Meeting held in 2001 and 2002. Matt Higgins represented FIG as a member of the UN Action Team. The Workshop was attended by 75 participants from 29 countries and 9 international organizations (International Telecommunication Union (ITU), European Commission, European Space Agency (ESA), Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM), International Association of Geodesy (IAG), International Cartographic Association (ICA), FIG, International GPS Service (IGS) and the UN OOSA.

Others

We are delighted to see that several UN agencies co-sponsored the 2<sup>nd</sup> FIG Regional Conference in Marrakech in December 2003. These include UNEP, FAO and UN-Habitat. The co-operation at this level seems to become a tradition because these agencies already co-sponsored the first Regional Conference in Nairobi and will do the same in October 2004 in Jakarta. The result from the Regional Conference 2003 “The Marrakech Declaration on Urban-Rural Interrelationship for Sustainable Environment” is expected to be a joint FIG/UN publication.

**5. Future activities**

FIG will participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Urban Forum in Barcelona in September 2004 together with the Habitat Professionals Forum by organising an event on city financing and independently on a parallel event on secure tenure.

FIG will be in charge of the arrangements of the joint UN / FIG / PC IDEA Inter-regional Workshop “Building land information policies” that will be arranged in Aguascalientes, Mexico, October 25-28, 2004.

March 2004