FIG Working Week 2005 and Conference on the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI-8)

Conference Summary

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FIG WW 2005 and GSDI-8 Conference

From Pharaohs to Geoinformatics
The region represents the challenges of our world

It's important that FIG comes to see these issues at first hand

- Urban deprivation
- Informal settlements
- Mega Cities
- Population characteristics biased towards the young
- Increasing poverty
- Scarce food resources
- Environmental problems, scarcities of natural resources
The potential to face challenges..

- A vibrant society
- Open minded leaders and decision makers across society
- Our profession is well represented (AUS part of the Arab League)
- Strong links with UN, World Bank, and other International Partners
- A strong educational system underpinning capacity

The question for our Egyptian Colleagues is: How well they are prepared for the future they face?
To fulfil our joint mission to serve society and ‘our one world’ we need collaboration between Geodesists, Surveyors and the Spatial Information Society.

That was the intention and the idea of this joint conference!
Barcelona Forum (WUF II)

To serve **Our one world**, which means:

In a globalised world

... problems cannot be exported.

... there is no outside.

... everything is local.
FIG WW 2005 & GSDI-8
An Extraordinary Event

Our Thanks to:

- Egyptian hosts (LOC)
- Sister Organisations and GSDI
- Speakers, chairpersons and rapporteurs
- Participants and delegates
- Exhibitors and sponsors
- FIG Office and FIG Commissions
- FIG Council members
Statistics of the Conference

- More than 900 participants coming from about 80 countries
- 5 plenary sessions
- 51 technical sessions and workshops
- More than 400 papers and posters
- Several meetings (FIG: Council, ACCO, Commissions, Workgroups, Regional Groups; GSDI; ISCGM; JBGSIS)
- AUS as a representative and professional voice of the region
- IAG, ISPRS, ICA, IMDA, ISCGM and ISM
- XIV FIG-Congress 2010 in Sydney
FIG Vision and Mission

We just heard that the Egyptian dreams have become true!

FIG has and must have Visions and Missions too:

- Humanitarian role
- Social responsibility
- Peace keeper by anticipation
- ‘Guardian’ of Property Rights
- Supporting democracy, equity and civil society
- Combating corruption
- Sustainability
- Good governance
From the Pharaohs to Where?
Future is coming faster than expected

The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there
(L.P. Hartley)

You cannot fight against the future. Time is on our side.
(M.E. Gladstone)

We have to be better and faster prepared
The Washington Challenge

Dr. Anna Kajumulo TIBAIJUKA
(UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat):

“The world needs ideas to solve today’s problems, not simply solutions for the long-term future”

*FIG Congress Washington, 2002*

Never the less we have to do both – we need a long term future strategy based on visions and increasing responsibilities and to solve today’s problems.
FIG has to balance . . .

From sustainability Rio Triangle (economic, ecological and social) to a second triangle:

- Institutional Arrangements
- Fulfilment of Millennium Development Goals
- Technical Solutions and Developments
- Political Interaction as a NGO
Challenges to FIG as a ‘Glocalist’

Harland Onsrud in his GSDI resolutions talked also about local to global!
FIG is working on fulfilling the UN Millennium Development Goals working on three levels

- **Globally**
  - Reducing inequalities of Civil Society
  - Partnering with our Sister Organisations
  - Supporting decision makers

- **Regionally**
  - Improving Economic Development in Africa (NEPAD)
  - Addressing the Digital Divide in Africa (CODI)
  - Better Managing Natural Resources in Africa (TIGER)

- **Locally**
  - Meeting the challenges of a country like Egypt as addressed by Minister Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Abu-Zeid and Dr. Ismail Serageldin (“scientific apartheid”)

Holger MAGEL: Conference Summary, FIG Working Week 2005
Meeting these Challenges . . .

We need to ask ourselves some questions:

- How to sustain our momentum? It depends on our own engagements, efforts and capabilities!
- How to work more collaboratively (internally / externally)?
- How to share knowledge more effectively?
- How to harness our diverse intellectual power?
- How to be more inclusive regarding age, gender, culture, language, resources?
- How to be more responsive?
- How to achieve all this without losing our identity?
Strategic/Political Level (1)

Messages to take home:

- Poverty reduction and alleviation is a fundamental goal (developing and developed countries are in one boat!)
- Removal of food insecurity
- Respond to threats from natural disasters (Surveyors as ‘peace keepers by anticipation’)
- Land and water habitats go across borders
- Always striving for good governance
Strategic/Political Level (2)

Messages to take home:

- Create a ‘win win situation’ by respecting our diverse disciplines
- We need a balance between private and public sectors
- Cross cutting collaborations are required politically, institutionally and professionally
- Bridging some gaps (e.g. between surveying and GIS)
- We must ensure that we are engaged with the Information Society including the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), Tunis, November 2005
Technical Level (1)

Messages to take home:

- We are Data Rich and Information Poor
- There is a War of Formats
- GIS is emerging as a new language
- GIS is about integrating knowledge
- Solutions require information from a multiplicity of sources: integration of GNSS, IfSAR, imaging, etc.
Messages to take home:

- Geodetic reference frameworks are essential and becoming more accurate
- Earth observations are making dramatic advances

CONCLUSION: From intentions and ideas to an accepted and proved reality: More than ever there is a need for closer cooperation of geodesists, surveyors and SDI partners

Therefore it has made great sense to start with this joint conference
Institutional Level

Messages to take home:

- Intensify the collaboration with sister organisations - (Joint Board of Spatial Information Societies)
- FIG is already seen as a valuable partner of the UN but has been invited to become a more central player
- Legal frameworks must be adopted to support e-services and new technologies
- Emergence of new institutional economics
The importance for our profession of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) (summit in Sharm el-Sheik and ‘Africa Action Plan’)  

We should do even more!
The joint board on Geospatial Information Societies has created a working structure including firstly two ad-hoc committees addressing commonality of approach to:

- Disaster Management
- Capacity building in Africa

FIG continues to pursue holistic visions through joint activities with IAG, and other partners

- AFREF (African Reference Frame Project) under NEPAD

A seminar on ‘Education in Africa’, next year in Accra – FIG-Regional Conference
Good Bye and See You in

Havana, Cuba, 26-29 September, 2005
*FIG 4th Regional Conference*

Accra, Ghana, 8-11 March, 2006
*FIG 5th Regional Conference*

Munich, Germany, 8-13 October, 2006
*XXIII FIG Congress*

Santiago de Chile, Chile, 6-10 November, 2006
*GSDI – 9*