

## **Building the Capacity - Current FIG Policies**

### **39<sup>th</sup> Conference of French Chartered Surveyors, and 1<sup>st</sup> Conference of European Surveyors**

**Strasbourg, France, 17-19 September 2008**

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FIG President**

President of the Alsace Regional Council, President the French Order of Licensed Surveyors, President of the Council of European Geodetic Surveyors, honourable guests, colleagues and friends, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of FIG, the International Federation of Surveyors, I am honoured to be invited to address you all to this conference organised by the French Order of Licensed Surveyors in partnership with the two European surveyor organisations CLGE (Council of European Geodetic Surveyors) and GE (Geometer Europas).

The main aim of this European conference is set to raise awareness of the surveying profession and increase its exposure among the various European institutions and EU consumers generally, both in France and across Europe. It is about building regional capacity. FIG is very happy to support this perspective that is also very much in line with the FIG policies of building regional capacity in Surveying and Land Management.

The FIG policies relates to flying high while still keeping our feet on the ground:

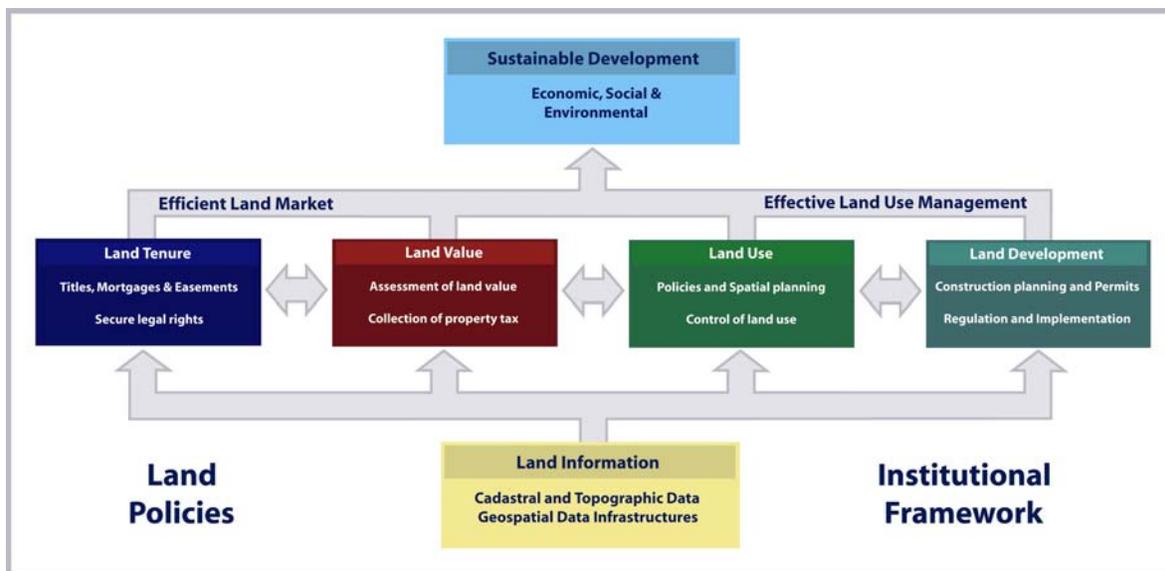
- **Flying high** - is the visionary part  
This is about global partnership with the UN-agencies such as FAO, UN-Habitat and the World Bank in support of the global agenda such as achieving the Millennium Development Goals. But it is also about building visions and partnership at the regional level such as the European territory or the Francophone Africa.
- **Keeping our feet on the ground** – is about professional practice  
This is about professional and institutional development at regional, national, and local level in support of the regional and local needs of our member associations and the individual surveyors.

In relation to this conference with a focus on the standing of the surveying profession – there is one big question to be asked: **Is the role of the surveyors changing?**

In a global perspective the answer will be “Yes”! There is a big swing that could be entitled **“From Measurement to Management”**. This does not imply that measurement is no longer a relevant discipline to surveying. The change is mainly in response to technology development. Collection of data is now easier, but the assessment, interpretation and management of data still require highly skilled professionals. But the role is changing into managing the measurements. There is wisdom in the saying that “All good coordination begins with good coordinates”. And the surveyors are the key providers. The change from measurement to management also means that surveyors are increasingly contribute to building sustainable societies as experts in managing land and properties.

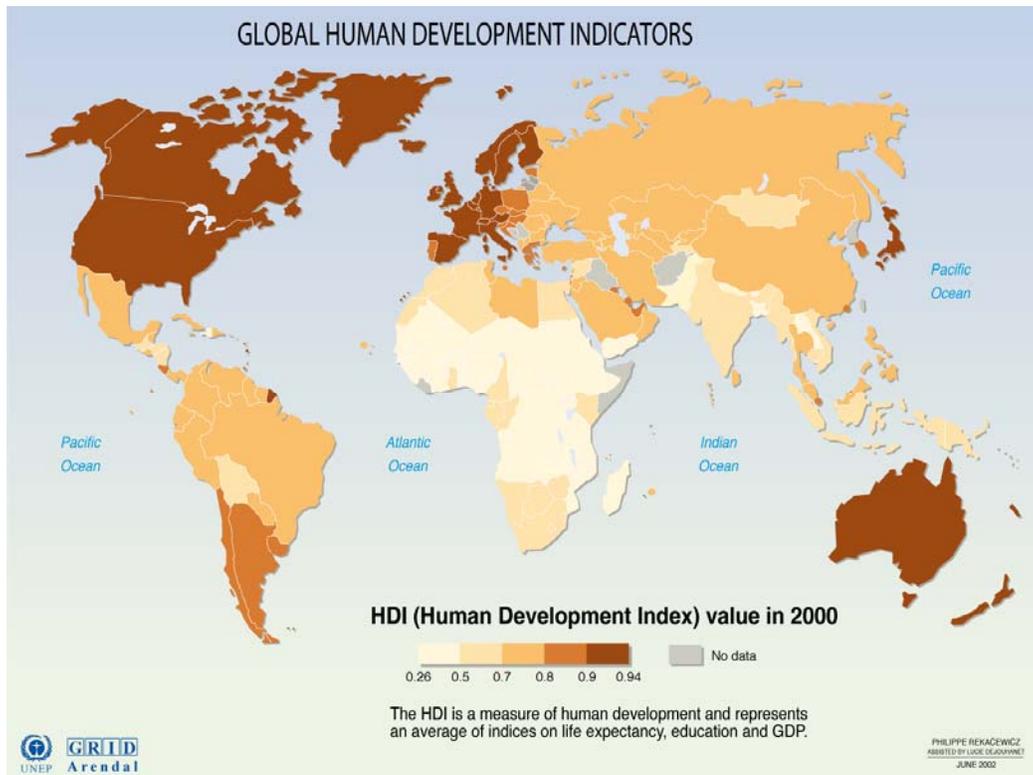
And another question should be asked: **Do surveyors have a role to play in the global agenda?** Again, from a FIG point of view, the answer to this question is clearly a “Yes”! The move from measurement to management also includes an increased focus on the social science issues such as land tenure, land policies and land management. These are all fields placed in the heart of the global agenda such as the Millennium Development Goals.

The surveyors play a key role in supporting an efficient land market and also effective land-use management. These functions underpin development and innovation for social justice, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. No development will take place without having a spatial dimension, and no development will happen without the footprint of surveyors – the **land professionals**. This role of the surveyors is illustrated well through the diagram below:

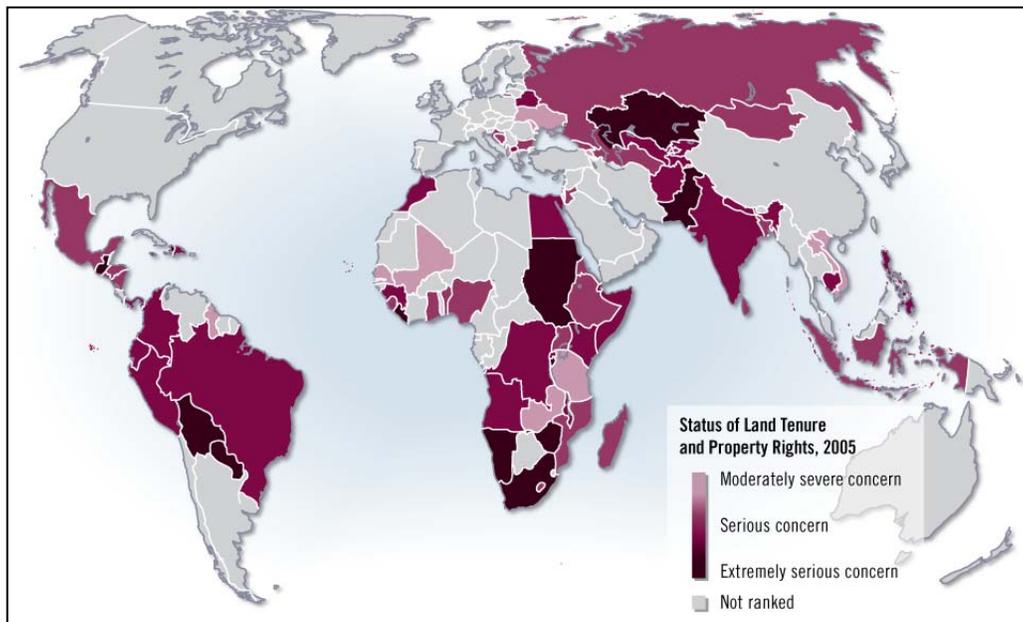


*A Global Land Management Perspective*

Another way to look at the global challenges – and the role of the surveyors - is provided through the two world maps shown below:



Human development Index – Source UNEP



Status of Land Tenure and Property Rights 2005 – Source: USAID and ARD, Inc. 2008.

*Dear colleagues and friends* - I use to say that the role of FIG is about:

- **Professional Development**, that is providing a global forum for professional discussions and interactions through conferences, symposia, and the work of the 10 FIG Commissions;
- **Institutional Development**, that is institutional support for educational and professional development at national and international level; and
- **Global Development**, that is cooperation with the UN agencies and sister organisations, through joint activities and common policy-making to reduce poverty and enforce sustainable development

Then the role of the national surveying associations is then about providing:

- **Professional Skills** through high level education and training, and CPD opportunities and requirements.
- **Professional Responsibilities** both toward the clients and toward society through strong professional organisations
- **Professional and Ethical Codes of Conduct**, to ensure common values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, and standards for delivery of professional services including mandatory schemes of indemnity insurance.

This is the key basis for building and enhancing the standing of the surveying profession.

**In conclusion** - FIG strongly supports regional organisations in surveying and land management that can facilitate regional development in response to regional needs, such as in Asia, Latin America, the Arab Countries, and Africa where it is a pleasure to see the strong representation from Francophone countries at this conference.

In Europe – where institutions and systems are generally well implemented, the focus is mainly on adjustment, improvement, capacity building, public/private partnership, education, CPD, ethics, etc - **the bar can not be set too high** - this also goes for the emerging economies in the eastern part of Europe.

However, Europe is not just one homogenous region. It is a mix of many cultures and languages that also represent a diversity of surveying and land administration systems. There is no such thing as one uniform role of the European surveyor. But this diversity is also strength where all parts of Europe can learn from each other. The Council of European Surveyors (CLGE) has an important role to play in this regard as was well demonstrated at the joint FIG/CLGE conference in Delft, November 2000 entitled “Enhancing Professional Competence of Surveyors in Europe”.

*Ladies and gentlemen* - let me finish by stating that FIG sees the European region as a very strong partner in building and enhancing the global standing of the surveying profession. FIG and the international surveying community strongly support this conference and I wish you all the best for some exciting and enjoyable days and also a successful outcome of this important event.

Thank you very much