

FIG COMMISSION 9 SEMINAR ON
COMPULSORY PURCHASE AND COMPENSATION

Helsinki, Finland, 6-8 September 2007

Opening Address

Stig Enemark, FIG President

Dear colleagues and friends

As president of FIG it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this seminar on Compulsory Purchase and Compensation organized by FIG Commission 9 in conjunction with a range of national and institutions, and especially FAO, the Land Tenure and Management Unit. Also UN-Habitat is here. The seminar this way provides a more global focus next to addressing the professional issues included in the theme. This is very well in line with the overall policies of FIG – to work close with the UN-agencies, and both “fly high and keep our feet on the ground”.

A special thanks to the Chair of Commission 9, Kauko Vitanen, for organizing and hosting this seminar at this early stage of office. I do know by my own experience that organizing such an event does not come easy, and you have furthermore taking on the challenge of offering peer review of the papers. Again this is in line with the overall policies of FIG where we intend to offer peer review of papers more generally starting from the upcoming Working Week in Stockholm, June 2008. We are also planning to establish an on-line FIG journal for publishing such papers.

It is obvious that Commission 9 is very good shape under Kauko’s chairmanship. Well done Kauko, and I wish you the best of luck for achieving the aims and objectives in your ambitious work plan. .

However, the real success of any seminar depends on the participants. I am delighted to see that this seminar is so well attended by experts from many regions of the world. Looking at the program we have three very interesting days ahead of us. Compulsory purchase and compensation can be viewed and discussed from many angles, such as safeguarding property ownership, a means for implementation of planning decisions, a tool or a process for implementing infrastructure and public facilities, etc. And it can be looked upon as a political, a legal, or a managerial issue. This is all reflected in the program.

What is also reflected is that the means of compulsory purchase and compensation is dealt with in many ways throughout the world. This seminar provides the opportunity of exchanging experiences from a range of countries throughout the world, in total about 20 country case studies. In general I think that this Seminar is very timely in any sense and I am sure that we will all enjoy both the presentations and the warm Finnish hospitality.

It is always nice to be back in Helsinki. I was here the first time during the FIG Congress in 1990, and then many times since. It is such a charming city and the weather is still good. Don't miss to explore the downtown and harbor areas while you are here. You will really enjoy it.

On behalf of FIG I warmly welcome you all.

Stig Enemark

FIG President