



### **Opening Ceremony**

Text of the Address by CheeHai TEO,  
President of the International Federation of Surveyors  
17<sup>th</sup> June 2014

First and foremost, it is my distinct pleasure, on behalf of the worldwide membership of the International Federation of Surveyors, gathered here in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to welcome Yang Amat Berhormat Perdana Menteri Malaysia, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak to our silver jubilee Congress.

FIG was founded in 1878 in Paris, hence we are known by the acronym of our name in French. Today, with a membership residing in over 125 jurisdictions and participations by many more, we are acknowledged by United Nations and World Bank as a non-governmental organization representing the interest of surveyors worldwide. We draw our membership from professionals working in both the public and private sectors, in the scientific, research and academic communities, as well as from technology innovators and industry. FIG functions out of the goodwill, resources and contributions of our membership and institutional partners through a corps of volunteers worldwide. We seek to collaborate and to contribute, to be armed with the updated knowledge and better practices, extending the usefulness of surveying for the betterment of society, environment and economy,

My membership and all delegates at this Congress sincerely thank Yang Amat Berhormat Perdana Menteri Malaysia for so graciously accepting our invitation to officiate the XXV FIG Congress and to honour all participants including sponsors and trade exhibitors with your presence this afternoon.

It also gives me great pleasure to convey to Most Honorable Prime Minister our memberships' utmost appreciation and thanks for the immense encouragement, generous contribution and solid support of your Government for this event. The convening of the XXV FIG Congress, the first FIG Congress ever held in Asia, is made more significant with the support of your Government, its agencies and the hospitality of your fellow citizens.

This XXV FIG Congress is a joint effort by our international professional community and local professionals to harness the best through the convergence of experiences and energies. Coincidentally, Kuala Lumpur means the convergence/confluence of two rivers. FIG Congress is our global forum where sciences, technologies, knowledge and practices come together; where issues, initiatives, researches and results converge and where cultures, diversity, specialization and expertise assemble.

This XXV FIG Congress is also a celebration, celebrating the culmination of collective efforts and collaborative actions. We celebrate Cadastre 2014, translated into 28 languages since its launch in 1998. Cadastre 2014 represents not just ideas and concepts, but our collective Professional passion and abilities to better comprehend and apply evolving concepts. We celebrate a number of joint declarations including the Joint FIG-World Bank Declaration on Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration, the Suva Statement on Spatially Responsible Governance in the context of Small Island developing states, the UN-GGIM-AP Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Spatially Enabling Governments and Societies.

This XXV FIG Congress is also about contribution. FIG's membership is privilege to be able to engage a series of global initiatives concurrently during this term of office that contributes towards the wellbeing of humanity. Today, we salute the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forest that should contribute towards tenure and food security and undernourishment. We too salute the resolution on "Sustainable urban development through expanding equitable access to land, housing, basic services and infrastructure" and the acceptance of a Continuum of Land Rights, the need for a plurality of tenure systems and for social tenures. We salute the initiatives on Global Geospatial Information Management and on Land Administration Domain Model. These global initiatives should lead societies and governments towards increasing collaboration and coordinated actions, greater transparency and better governance, towards whole-of-government effectiveness and improved efficiencies, towards citizen-centric services, contributing towards shared progress and prosperity.

This XXV FIG Congress is also about commitment. Our Profession is well aware of the rapidly changing and dynamic environment where better governance of our land and the seas, our natural and built environment, including its resources and assets remain paramount. With a global population of over 7 billion, where one in eight is under nourished, where 52% are urbanized and one in four urban dwellers lives under inequitable and at times life threatening conditions, where 80% lives below US\$10.00 a day, an estimated 70% trying to improve their tenure security, where many more live under the threat of disasters arising from increasing climate variabilities and extremes. We remain committed that our measurement and mapping, our modeling and analysis, our valuation and estimates, our systems and solutions, and our planning and management continue to extend our usefulness and contribute towards the betterment of society, environment and economy

The surveying profession is a real world, people centric, solution-oriented profession. It is a creative and constructive profession engaged in idea generation, conceptualization and constructive development, engaging in the creative and innovative processes that generates new approaches and opportunities, including that which has never before existed.

Hence, our Profession firmly believes in engaging challenges, including tomorrow's challenges, today. This is necessary, as on our horizon is the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda that calls for inclusive economic development, social progress and environmental sustainability. An Agenda that responds to the aspirations of all people seeking a world free of want and fear. This Agenda is expected to be bold and transformational.

Thus with the theme "*engaging the challenges; enhancing the relevance*", the XXV FIG Congress is where our sciences and technologies, our knowledge and practices converge, where our friendship and fellowship, our expertise and minds meet, where colleagues and friends, partners and stakeholders resolve that our collective, complementary and collaborative knowledge and efforts will provide governments and societies the feasible path forward towards realizing the future we want for all. This Congress is where we commit and contribute, to remain useful and relevant, to address the challenges of the times.

Thank you.