

**2<sup>nd</sup> FIG REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2003 - MARRAKECH**  
**“Urban – Rural Interrelationship for Sustainable Environment”**

**Commission 5 (Positioning and Measurement)**  
**Report from UK delegate and Chair of Working Group 5.4 – Dan Schnurr**

### **1. Conference – Technical Sessions**

Commission 5 coordinated five of the conference technical sessions; TS3, TS6, TS9, TS12 and TS23. In total 27 papers were presented in these sessions. The quality of the presentations varied as some difficulties in the translation from French into English and vice versa were evident due to the technical content of the papers. In addition not all of the presenters were able to make the journey to Marrakech.

The range of subjects included some excellent papers right on the theme of the conference. Such as the use of handheld GPS receivers for precise positioning and the use of SPOT 5 satellite imagery for the assessment of sand erosion around urban settlements. In particular, a paper of importance to the Commission 5 community was: “Terrestrial Laser Scanning – Technology, Systems and Applications was presented by Rudolf Staiger. This covered the key requirements of a Laser scanning project and most importantly the central part of “Assessment”, which sits between Acquisition and Presentation of the data.

The nationalities represented were mainly from Africa and Europe. The Commission 5 papers can all be found on the FIG website with the full conference proceedings at <http://www.fig.net/figtree/pub/morocco>

### **2. Conference – Plenary Sessions and Workshops**

The plenary sessions of the conference were particular papers selected to be specifically on the theme. These included two excellent papers, one from the UNEP DEC and DEPI Director, Svein Tveitdal and one from Stig Enemark.

Working Group 5.4 (WG5.4), Cost Effective Surveying Technology and Techniques for Developing Countries held a working session to plan the work plan for the remaining period of the 2002 – 2006 four year term. It was decided to produce a FIG guidelines publication in time for the Munich 2006 Congress. This will be a document which will include a discussion of the issues if using cost effective technology and techniques, provide a system for selection of methods given requirements and provide guidelines to produce a specification. Two specific papers will also be produced by the WG for FIG WW 2004 at Athens.

### **3. Exhibition**

A small exhibition was present at the side of the conference venue, in a small marquee. This had only 7 or 8 exhibitors who were mainly the Moroccan dealers for the usual survey equipment and software providers. Most of the stands were small, however, an exception was the stand from the ANCFCC (Agence Nationale de la Conservation Fonciere du Cadastre et de la Cartographie). This agency is the Moroccan government agency for mapping. Their stand was well laid out and showed the large variety of work the ANCFCC undertakes. From basic survey, to cadastral measurement, ground control and geodesy, to photogrammetry and

final map production. There were also a wide variety of mapping and other products on display. These included orthophoto cadastre plans showing land parcel areas and 6 colour 1:2,000 scale large format mapping. The products were of very high quality and it was a clear indication of the benefits of retaining all elements of the map making process within a government agency.

#### **4. Social Program**

It is unusual to report this formally, however, the social program of this conference deserves a special mention. The two evening events can only be described as sublime. The Moroccan Evening was held in a 15<sup>th</sup> Century Palace and one felt transported back in time to the glorious days of the orient. Turbaned assistants wrapped in white and wearing yellow slippers brought forth course after course of a sumptuous banquet. The mutton cooked for several days in a earthenware jar and the lemon chicken tagine were particularly superb. The evening also included music and dancing on a traditional Moroccan theme.

By contrast, in a brilliant masterstroke, the Gala Dinner was completely different. The evening started with a procession through the streets of Marrakech by horse drawn carriage. Not just for the FIG president, but for all the delegates! Some 70 carriages were lined up outside the conference hotel for almost half a mile. The journey through the dark ochre coloured streets ended at a huge display of acrobats, fire eaters, dancers, musicians, attendants with torches and mounted warriors. Delegates then entered what at first looked like another palace, however, it was a thoroughly modern French style Moroccan restaurant. The contrast of this thoroughly modern side of Morocco with the history of the previous evening was outstanding.

One was left with an overwhelming feeling of incredible hospitality, friendship, joy and admiration for this amazing society and its people.

#### **5. Commission 5 Administration**

Rudolf Staiger represented Commission 5 at the meeting of the Advisory Committee of Commission Officers (ACCO).

The Commission 5 Steering Committee held a meeting of those Vice Chairs present. Commission Chair and Vice Chair for Administration joined them in teleconference from Brisbane Australia. Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting are available on the Commission 5 web site.

#### **Summary**

Commission 5 will have a role in assisting in the production of the Marrakech Statement. This will particularly be the case with Working Group 5.4.

This conference was extremely effective in achieving its aims and focussing on all the issues of its theme. It was a conference not just for FIG but also for the practicing surveyors of Morocco. With the goal of producing the Marrakech Statement, the conference title, papers, discussions and other work will become reality in a useful document for the countries that most need it.