

Promoting Land Administration and Good Governance

Keynote address and Opening of the Conference

FIG President Professor Dr.-Ing. Holger MAGEL

Honourable Mr. Senior Minister Mensah, Honourable Minister Professor Fobih, Dignitary Nana Num and Queen Mother, Mr. Honorary FIG President, Distinguished Guests, Dear Colleagues and Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of FIG, the “mother of all surveying and surveyors”, I would like to welcome you to our 5th FIG Regional Conference for Africa in Accra. Akwaaba! With great pleasure and interest we have followed the invitation of our Ghanaian member, GhIS, to organize a special congress for the West African region thus hopefully giving an important and obvious signal to decision makers, professionals and even to the public. I thank all our Ghanaian friends, especially GhIS President Dr. Prah and Conference Coordinator Stephen Djaba and their LOC-members very much for extreme hard efforts but finally for very successful work. It is such an impressive audience!! Thank you for coming! I would like to thank you too, Mr. Senior Minister, and you, Professor Fobih, for not only coming to this conference and thus honouring our profession and our institutions but also for strong supports to this conference by your Ministry of Lands and some state authorities like the survey department. Thank you very much, dear Ministers!!

Ladies and Gentlemen, the former Director of International Monetary Fund and big friend of Africa, the German President Professor Horst Köhler recently has launched an ‘Initiative for Africa’ and has invited outstanding African leaders to a round table to the Petersberg guest house near the old capital city Bonn. His motif was and is very clear and becomes more and more understandable for more and more people. Professor Köhler said: “Our humanity will be decided by the fate of Africa!” and he made a plea for more commitment to Africa.



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Committed to Africa?

What must happen to make the world recognize that the destiny of Africa is also the future of the whole world? "Our humanity will be decided by the fate of Africa" the German President Horst Köhler said when launching his "Initiative for Africa" in November 2005.

We have seen shocking TV reports about Africans climbing up the fences of the Spanish enclave in Morocco and pictures of stranded boats of African refugees. But what is happening besides nice and symbolic words and meetings?

It is said that since September 11, 2001 the world has finally given up looking at Africa. Additionally a lot of African rulers rectify this attitude of developed countries arguing that it is nearly hopeless to spend millions of dollars on Africa because the money does not reach the poor. Insiders from Africa and international development agencies argue that endogenous development is

courses in developed countries. The best way for self-aid would be that the Sub-Saharan countries should strongly be encouraged to offer academic surveying education supported financially and technically by the international community.

FIG together with the United Nations and partners like the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies have started their own African initiative. On the occasion of the FIG 5th Regional Conference in Accra, Ghana in March 2006 a full-day seminar on "Surveyor Education in Africa" will be held. The goal is to present new initiatives for central and southern African countries on

With some pride and self-confidence I can tell you that FIG has started its commitment to Africa since a long time and has increased its presence especially in the last five years.

FIG is committed to Africa



Opening Ceremony
Professor Dr.-Ing. Holger Magel, FIG President
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5th FIG Regional Conference
Accra, Ghana, March 8-11, 2006

Accra is, as already mentioned, the third Regional Conference in Africa after Nairobi, Kenya 2001 and Marrakech, Morocco 2003, and last year we additionally had our Working Week in Cairo, Egypt. And if you have had a look at the topics of these congresses it seems that you have had a look at some important challenges of this continent: It was spatial information and data management, urban-rural-interrelationship for sustainable development and modern aspects and tools of geodesy and geoinformatics.

When President Köhler has explained the goals of his Africa initiative to the media in Germany it happened probably first time that problems and aspects of land policy and land reform, access to land and resources also for poor people, tenure security, or the need for open land markets and respect to customary rights got publicity beyond the insiders, i.e. the professionals and land experts. Land became popular to be the bottle neck everywhere! Surveyors and FIG are deeply committed to the sustainable development in its member or home countries, surveyors always had and have to serve society based on and by implementing ethical and humanitarian principles such as equity, democracy and liberty or equality of opportunity to everybody! Surveyors are not pure technicians apart from politics and human beings only, but they are essential pillars of each society by providing a lot of indispensable and ethically and socially oriented services – starting from the land issue and “single parcel” to contributions to a better knowledge about our planet earth system and neighbour planets. We believe in Ortega y Gasset's sentence: “To be a good technician it is not enough to be a good technician only.”

Ladies and Gentlemen, do you know GESA? The Geomatic Engineering Students Association of Ghana? Last week the students welcomed me and my wife by singing their GESA anthem:

“With our skills we help build mother Ghana. In the storms we survey, in the sun we portray to make Ghana a happy place to stay. Every night, every day, no matter what comes our way to make the world a happy place to stay”

That is it, Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable Guests. You can be very proud of such young inspired engineers who are willing to serve Ghana and the world. “To make Ghana and the world a happy place to stay.”, that could be and that is the real background of our conference topic “Promoting Land Administration and Good Governance”.

I think, nearly everybody in this hall knows a lot about the need and contents of good land administration and good governance, especially the decision makers and experts in Ghana in the face of the LAP! Nearly everybody knows also about the inseparable interrelationship between both, land administration and good governance. It is perhaps the same question like the question about that “Who is first? The hen or the egg?”, if you ask about “First land administration or first good governance?”



UN Development Programme's (UNDP's) CHARACTERISTICS of GOOD GOVERNANCE

- 1. Participation**
- 2. Rule of Law**
- 3. Transparency**
- 4. Responsiveness**
- 5. Consensus Orientation**
- 6. Equity**
- 7. Effectiveness and Efficiency**
- 8. Accountability**
- 9. Strategic Vision**
- 10. Subsidiarity**
- 11. Security**

Source: tugi@undp.org



**„Good Governance is
perhaps the single most
important factor in
eradicating poverty and
promoting development.“**

**Kofi Annan
Secretary General
United Nations**

Sure and without any doubt is that you need both, land administration and good governance are twin. You need both as a central basis for sustainable development, as a precondition for reliable and transparent information, planning and decision including dispute resolution, you

need them as a steward for implementing the MDG's or e.g. the brand new Euro-African pact and finally as a compass towards more prosperity and democracy.



UN Millennium Development Plan – Goals

- **Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**
- **Achieve universal primary education**
- **Promote gender equality and empower women**
- **Reduce child mortality**
- **Improve maternal health**
- **Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**
- **Ensure environmental sustainability**
- **Develop a global partnership for development**

Source: UN Web Services Section, Department of Public Information, United Nations (2006)

Let me show you some of the hot issues of this pact!



EU Strategy for Africa: Towards a Euro-African pact to accelerate Africa's development

Brussels, December 10, 2005
COM (2005) 489 final (SEC (2005) 1255)

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Tackle the MDGs directly

Improve sustainable territorial management through the development of an integrated approach to support sustainable *urban development*, based on the twin pillars of good urban governance and good urban management. In addition, the EU should support better *territorial development and land use planning*. Action in these fields is all the more necessary as the progressive emptying of the countryside has widened the gap between the haves and the have-nots in Africa.

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Tackle the MDGs directly

Land reform will also play a vital role in bridging the social gap and the EU is determined to support it. In this endeavour, the EU is providing support to the timely access to Earth Observation data which has proven particularly well adapted to the African context.

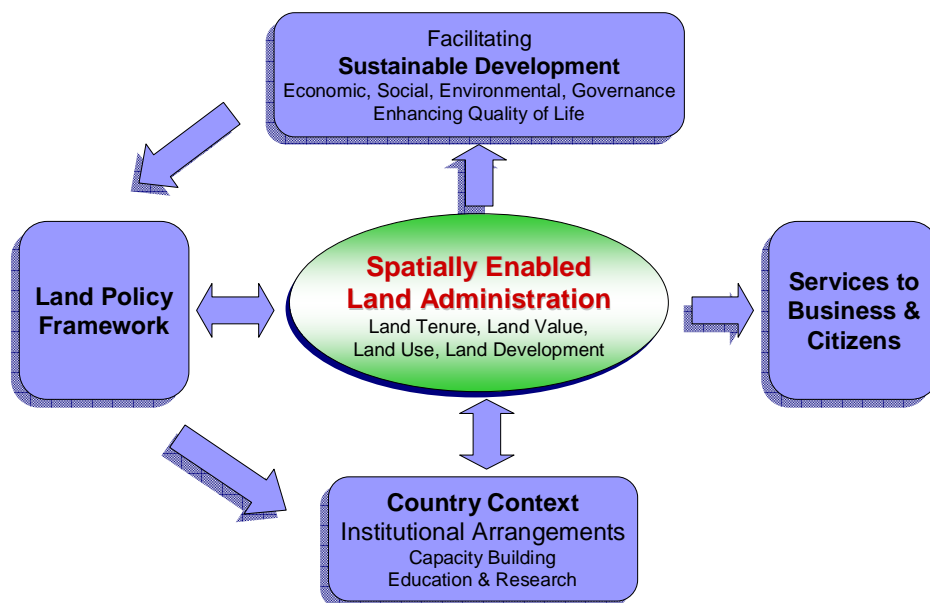
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FIG is not an international consultant and is not acting in this way. FIG is a non-governmental organisation with more than 100 incorporated countries and thus like a treasure chest with huge experiences from everywhere. Our ten commissions are centers of excellence and are the guarantors of global and local best practice! FIG is well aware that each country needs its individual solutions with respect to its own tradition, culture, religion, social fabric and in this sense with respect to the prevailing tenure systems. But FIG knows too – and is therefore promoting it – that there are everywhere basic truths and principles which cover hopefully the respective right answers for strategies and approaches in the fields of e.g.

- **urban** and **rural** development (focusing only on urban areas is too less and will not solve the problems)
- field of sustainable, i.e. land consumption reducing and also much more environmentally oriented land use planning and its consequently following implementation
- decentralisation and subsidiarity by especially encouraging civic engagement and private initiatives or by fostering cross current or so called dialogue planning between bottom and top levels
- well balanced private public partnerships



A Land Management Vision



- interrelationship between land policy framework, land information or spatially enabled land administration (like land tenure, land values, land use, land development), institutions, capacity building, education and research and finally services to business and citizens as well as facilitating sustainable development towards a better quality of life. Our GESA-students and we aim at making our countries a happy place to stay

- for our children. They are the hope and future!!



- for our young people today
- for our women (today is International Women Day! A special focus of FIG is on gender issues!)
- for our families
- for our nations!

Is there a more inspiring vision than to take care of our garden Eden and to fulfil our divine mission and responsibility for our ‘one world’? We should strongly believe in what the President of the Club of Rome, HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal has said, and this leads us back to President Köhler’s plea for more humanity and commitment: “**Human solidarity** and **common** action are our sole hope for the preservation of the planet and of human kind.”

Mr. Senior Minister, the vitalization of human resources and human solidarity was exactly Ghana’s President’s message at the 49th Independence Day on last Monday.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there should be no doubt that promoting land administration and good governance can help us to carry out our mission and to work in faith in God and in confidence to our capacity and our increased self-responsibility and self-determination.

There is additionally no doubt too, that nothing can happen from one day to next; what we therefore need is **patience**, especially in the field of building up a land administration system.

Our advices are therefore:

- Think big, start small
- put and keep land administration in the political mainstream
- avoid stop-and-go politics and policies
- reduce bureaucracy and remove bureaucratic obstacles
- build up modern geodetic reference systems
- improve communication between the different agencies
- consider more privatisation and, as a precondition of all
- provide best educated and well-trained (survey) professionals!

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Listeners, this 5th FIG Regional Conference should give two central messages:

Firstly, to clearly demonstrate the importance and need of land administration and good governance and secondly, to underline the central role which surveyors can play in these fields.

I hope that I could convince you that surveyors are not only highly trained specialists and experts but also specialists for the daily life and the manifold needs of society.



Surveyors are specialists of low land reality and daily life

Surveyors should play a manifold role as

enablers for local people, CBO and NGO

mediators between citizens and authorities

advisors to politicians and state institutions

With this optimism I declare, on behalf of one organizer, the FIG, the 5th FIG Regional Conference for Africa 2006 opened.