

FIG WORKING WEEK IN HANOI, VIETNAM, 22-26 APRIL 2019

Land Surveying: Towards a Smarter Life



Surveyors and land professionals from all over the world came together in April in the heat of Hanoi to take part in the FIG 2019 Working Week. This year's theme was 'Geospatial information for a smarter life and environmental resilience'. The conference had a strong focus on tackling climate change by working towards a smarter life, both through the development of smart cities and also in rural areas. Spatial information, big data, surveying, BIM, land administration and much more are recognized as being essential factors in this development. There is a strong awareness that Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are directly linked to surveyors' activities and that surveyors should contribute to achieving them.

The old city of Hanoi with its temples and historical architecture is a unique experience. One feels surrounded by friendliness. The traffic is very busy with millions of mopeds on the roads, but everything flows very organically based on collective cooperation: a miracle. Around a thousand participants were

welcomed to the Working Week during the opening session featuring a spectacular cultural performance which proudly presented the country's rural roots from many regions.

Opening ceremony of the FIG Working Week in Hanoi.

Digital public goods

Hanoi was the first event under Prof Rudolf Staiger's leadership. As FIG president, he shared his vision of the surveying profession in a world where maps and spatial data are digital public goods – free of charge, up to date, high quality and with almost no blind spots. Against this backdrop, he positioned surveying as a modern profession acting worldwide for better infrastructure, both for society and for planet Earth. Land administration can make a key contribution to social and civil security, reducing conflict and bringing peace and economic benefits. He highlighted that classic cadastral approaches are too time-consuming and expensive; faster solutions are needed. The fit-for-purpose principle is an interesting general approach which needs to be adapted to each individual case. It should be seen as an extension to the classic cadastre rather than as a replacement. His statements were the subject of heated and sometimes fiery debate during the conference. It is clear that changes are afoot with the availability of the latest innovations in data acquisition that facilitate participatory approaches.

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Land tenure security

Mika-Petteri Törhönen, lead land administration specialist at the World Bank and keynote speaker at the opening session, provided a fascinating overview of secure tenure for all – men and women – in the context of the World Bank's land and geospatial programme with a special reference to achieving the SDGs. He highlighted that land tenure security is key to ending poverty, eliminating hunger, achieving gender equality and sharing prosperity. The profession has to deliver comprehensive land records in modern systems based on cadastral intelligence.

For the first time, the FIG Young Surveyors held a keynote presentation and they gave delegates a sense of the community feeling that they are establishing around the globe. The council motto for this term, which President Rudolf Staiger presented at the General Assembly, is 'Volunteering for the Future' and it was in this spirit that the president gave the floor to the future of surveying and the future of FIG.

The local organizers were pleased to show the ancient history and recent development of Vietnam. In his presentation, Prof Dr Pham Van Cu, former vice-minister of the Vietnam Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, pointed out the opportunities and challenges in Vietnam's current transition from the 'electronic' era to the 'smart' era. As a special treat, the local organizers also arranged for all participants to visit the opera for a special performance held especially for this occasion.

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The conference was organized in cooperation with FIG and the Vietnamese Association of Geodesy Cartography and Remote Sensing. Thanks go to the whole team for this well-organized Working Week, and also to the sponsors – ESRI, Trimble, Leica, LX Korea, Ripro, Geo-Plus, South, Bels+ and Chinese Federation of Surveying and Mapping (Taiwan) – as well as all exhibitors and the partners for the technical programme: World Bank, UN-Habitat/GLTN, FAO and UN-GGIM.

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<https://www.gim-international.com/content/article/land-surveying-towards-a-smarter-life>
