

GhIS/CASLE/FIG CONFERENCE
THE SURVEYOR: PARTNER IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ACCRA, GHANA, 22-28 FEBRUARY 2010.

Welcome Address by Professor Stig Enemark, FIG President, Denmark.

Honorable Minister for Land and Natural Resources, Honorable Minister for Transport; Mr. K. H. Osei-Asante President Ghana Institution of Surveyors, Mr. Joseph Segun Ajanlekoko, African Regional President of CASLE, distinguished guests, dear colleagues and friends, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great honour for me to address such a distinguished audience on behalf of FIG, The International Federation of Surveyors, and its more than 100 member associations throughout the world representing more than 300,000 surveyors or land professionals worldwide. Please accept my warm greetings to you all.

As you will recall FIG was here in March 2006 when Ghana Institution of Surveyors was hosting the fifth FIG regional Conference here in Accra. We all still recall this conference as a wonderful experience and with impressive evidence of the commitment of the Ghanaian Surveyors' commitment to serving society through the major Land Administration Project (LAP). So it is good to be back - this time also jointly with CASLE - and I am looking forward to experience your progress over the past four years.

In this regard, the theme of the conference: "The Surveyor: Partner in National Development" is very appropriate and timely. Surveying is not only about serving the clients – it is just as well about serving society as recognised experts in land Management and connected surveying and mapping activities.

Lack of proper information and insecure property rights hinder good governance and the emergence of engaged civil society. It is as simple as that. Without good and up to data information and without effective access to land and property, economy is unable to progress and the goal of sustainable development cannot be achieved.

However, the creation of modern information systems and the implementation of sound land administration systems are not as simple as that. This is the major challenge of the broad based profession of surveyors or land professionals.

Mr. President, dear colleagues – let me emphasise that these issues of land administration and management are in the heart of the global agenda in terms of the Eight Millennium Development Goals. And we as the professionals in the areas of land surveying and mapping, land administration, and land information management have a responsibility to respond to this global agenda and to contribute to improving the living conditions in our societies. Eventually land administration is about people and their well being. This event will add to that perspective.

I will come back to that - and also the role of FIG in this regard - in my keynote presentation tomorrow morning. This will also be the introduction to an almost full day seminar conducted by Mrs Diane Dumashie the current chair of FIG Commission 8. The seminar will focus on Peri-Urban Development and the role of Traditional Authorities and Land Professionals.

FIG is committed to “Building the Capacity” - the theme of the current council. And FIG is committed to Africa. FIG has established an Africa Task Force that will run for the next four years aiming to build the capacity of the African Surveying Profession and how it can best contribute to meet the challenges of poverty alleviation, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. This Task Force will also be chaired by Dr. Diane Dumashie so please liaison with Diane during these coming days.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen - FIG and the international surveying community strongly support this event. The organisers should be congratulated for putting together such a wide ranging and interesting program. I wish you all the best for some exciting and also enjoyable days. - Thank you very much.