

Address of the President of the International Federation of Surveyors at the Opening Ceremony of the 2012 Working Week and Conference

CheeHai TEO, FIG President

On behalf of all participants, I like to thank President Napolitano and the Government of Italy as well as Mr. Alemanno, the Mayor of the Eternal City, Rome for their hospitality and support for this year's Working Week that includes the First FIG Young Surveyors Conference. Our thanks also to Mr. Polilo, Honorable Deputy Minister of Economy Italy and Mr. Fanelli, Honorable Deputy Minister of Environment Italy for their support.

We must also thank Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for their contribution and partnership. FAO is the institutional Partner for this year's Working Week.

We also thank United Nations Human Settlement Programme and its Global Land Tools Network for their contribution and partnership. We have in our midst representatives of grassroots organizations, namely Huairou Commission, International Land Coalition and Slum Dwellers International, whose participation here this week has been facilitated by GLTN. Then, the allied societies from the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies who are also present here this week.

I must not forget Trimble Navigation as well as ESRI for their continued sponsorship and together with the FIG Foundation, continuing investing in building sustainable futures within our Profession.

I also like to thank all CNGGeL's members and Boards in the Provinces and their Presidents, Cassa Italiana di Previdenza ed Assistenza dei Geometri Liberi Professionisti (the Italian Surveyors Social Security Fund) for their contribution.

My appreciation and thanks to President Fausto Savoldi, President of Consiglio Nazionale Geometri e Geometri Laureti Italy, Mr. Enrico Rispoli, his Secretary General, his National Board and members of his local organizing committee for all the effort and hard work in making this week the most attended Working Week for FIG.

Most of all, I want to thank our entire membership, our member associations, our corporate members, our affiliate members and our academic members, all presenters, session chairs, participants and accompany persons for your contribution and participation to what is already an exciting week.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are in a rapidly changing environment and good governance of our land and the seas, our natural and built environment, its resources and assets remain paramount. We are witnessing a new generation of web and mobile services, such as online maps and location based services

that are stimulating an increasing interest and use of our sciences and technologies in society today.

Information, with both geographic and temporal context, is increasingly being used to find, say a restaurant, to ensure emergency services arrive at incidents in time, to support the formulation of policies, for evidence based decisions, to ensure that services are better targeted to citizens needs as well as to empower citizens and communities to manage their communities and administer their spaces more effectively.

With global initiatives on managing all information spatially, on voluntary guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forest, on spatially enabling governments and societies, towards greater transparency and good governance, towards whole-of-government effectiveness and efficiencies in citizen-centric delivery systems, the usefulness of surveying (its science, its technologies, its practices) in addressing the developmental and economical challenges of the times is recognized. Our Profession and our Federation is at a historic moment.

The Profession is now firmly in the continuum paradigm. We embraced the Continuum of Land Rights, we know we must adopt a continuum of approaches, a continuum of technologies and technological sophistication, a continuum of accuracies. We understand that we have to progress beyond securing tenure rights for all into land valuation and taxation, land development and construction and the land market. We need to move into the next Paradigm where we are inclusive and innovative, where we will be required to embrace Open Standards; Interoperability (of systems, institutional and legislation); culture of collaboration and sharing; avoidance of duplication; incorporation of volunteered information; developing enabling platforms and delivering knowledge from information and data from different scales, purposes and origins.

There need to be structural changes in the institutional, legislative and professional domains.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The surveyor today and tomorrow, whether we are working on land or in the seas, into construction or properties and real estate, we must be in the business of providing solutions with our data, information and knowledge. Our profession is a real world people centric profession, ours is a creative and constructive profession. And we must continue to be so.

During these times, it is important that we are engaging in idea generation, conceptualization and constructive development, engaging in the creative processes that inspire the young, that which is innovative, that generates new approaches and opportunities, including that which has never before existed. We must devise fit-for-purpose, affordable, appropriate and applicable approaches as we seek to be part of the solution the world expects from our Profession in addressing the challenges humanity faces today.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am told that if we really wanted to enter into the spirit of this day, I should not have addressed you. We should simply be listening to music of two of the world's better-known composers. This day, in 1833, Johannes Brahms was born in Germany. And in 1840, Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky was born in Russia. An incredible birthday pair – I must say.

I have no choice but to hope that at least my words will also be music to your ears! Have a wonderful evening and a great week.

With this, it is my distinct privilege to declare the 2012 FIG Working Week and Conference OPEN!

Thank you.