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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SURVEYORS  
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER  
VERMESSUNGSINGENIEURE

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#### FIG OFFICE

Louise Friis-Hansen, office manager  
Markku Villikka, FIG director

International Federation of Surveyors, FIG  
Kalvebod Brygge 31-33  
DK-1780 Copenhagen V, Denmark  
Tel + 45 3886 1081  
Fax + 45 3886 0252  
Email: fig@fig.net  
Website: www.fig.net

## Review of 8<sup>th</sup> FIG Regional Conference in Montevideo

The 8<sup>th</sup> FIG Regional Conference in Montevideo, Uruguay, was held successfully in November 2012, attracting some 250 participants from 33 countries across Latin America and beyond. One aim of the conference was to increase co-operation between the Latin American countries. The regional flavour of the event and its perfect organisation by the Asociación de Agrimensores del Uruguay (AAU) was a solid base for colleagues to get acquainted with each other and to share ideas, knowledge and ambitions. The theme of the conference was 'Surveying towards Sustainable Development'. Keynotes were organised in three sessions:

- 'Relevance and Contribution of Surveying and Spatial Information', with keynotes from Ambassador John Biehl del Rio, Organisation of American States (OAS), and Victoria Stanley, World Bank, about activities, impacts and benefits of various (OAS and World Bank) initiatives in Latin America, from Jorge Franco, Uruguay, on the challenges of surveying, and from Solomon Abebe Haile, UN-HABITAT, on participatory and inclusive land readjustment.
- 'Technological and Educational, Regional and Youth Initiatives for Sustainable Development', with keynotes from Andrés Díez Galilea, Spain, on the impact of initiatives such as INSPIRE on education, from Claudio Brunini, Argentina, on the SIRGAS – the regional reference system for the Americas, from Hector Cancela, Uruguay, on curricula in Uruguay, and from Toril Iren Pedersen, Norway, on youth responsiveness in the land sector.
- 'Professional and Technological Trends and Horizons of Surveying Spatial Technologies' with keynotes from Brent Jones of ESRI, USA, on



*Excursion to Colonia de Sacramento, Uruguay.*

current, upcoming and future trends and technologies, from Roberto Perez Rodino, Uruguay, on the new paradigm for the survey engineer, and from Fausto Savoldi, Italy, on the agenda, vision and opportunities for the profession.

The final session was closed with an impressive keynote from FIG president CheeHai Teo. He introduced FIG as a global society with a membership from over 120 countries. There are now 10 technical commissions that demonstrate the breadth and diversity of our competence within the land, natural and built environment, he said. There is extensive co-operation with sister organisations. As a United Nations and World Bank Group-recognised non-governmental organisation, FIG is seeking to collaborate and to ensure that the surveying disciplines are relevant and meeting the needs of both the places and the people they serve. Some highlights have been:

- the outcome of the UN Conference in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro. The document entitled 'The Future We Want' recognised the need for reliable geospatial information.

- the UN Voluntary Guidelines endorsed by the United Nations Committee on World Food Security. FIG has to move to the implementation phase.
  - the key message of FIG at the 2012 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty: the recognition that we are in an era of competing demands on existing resources, and that there is the continued need to ensure the efficient and effective deployment of solutions, approaches and tools to achieve the desired outcomes.
  - the affirmation of the continuum of land rights by UN-HABITAT's Governing Council, which include both documented and undocumented rights. This range of rights generally cannot be described relative to a parcel, and therefore new forms of spatial units are needed.
- Work to be done!!

*Louise Friis-Hansen  
Christiaan Lemmen*

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