

**Briefing Paper from Commission 8  
Spatial Planning & Development**

**FIG Regional Working Cairo 18<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2005  
In Conjunction with 8<sup>th</sup> Global Spatial Data Infrastructure GSD1 –  
From Pharaohs to Geoinformatics**

Commission 8 was again fully involved in an active and rewarding week in Cairo, characteristically we worked with partners both in and outside our commission as well as successfully identifying a Chair elect for the period 2006- 10.

Foremost, it is with pleasure that we are able to welcome Simon Adcock (Australia) as Commission 8 chair elect, he is now in place to continue with coordinating the 2006 work plan. His nomination was received at the first General Assembly, held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> when a motion from the German Delegation requested that the Australian nomination be considered. The Member Associations voted that if no further nominations were received from any other Association prior to the next General Assembly, on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>, then the motion to elect Simon Adcock would be accepted.

During Sunday afternoon, Comm 8 held its administration Session. The discussion concentrated on both the practical needs of delegates as well as new topics for our next work plan. Although the topics raised reflect our commission's wide range of interests, these will require greater focus, to be determined by the members associations who are able to nominate willing chairmen to lead new working groups. As is usual, Simon Adcock, as our chair elect, will progress this discussion with comm 8 delegates. He'll build upon the links made by Diane Dumashie promoting cross commission activity with Commissions 10, 9, 7 and 4 some possibilities with 6. Furthermore, the Chairman's activities over the past twelve months, have resulted in welcoming new delegates to Comm 8. Greetings to Eszta Hona, Mette Kragh and Simon Forbes, all of whom were able to attend and contribute in Cairo.

In addition, the working groups reported on their activities. First, WG 8.3 continues to forge links with UN Habitat, holding a breakfast meeting in Cairo with UN Head of branch on Secure Tenure resulting in devising a method of approach to begin drafting the statement for Munich in 2006. The agreed direction positively emphasises the educational aspects required of surveyors to enable their contribution in informal settlement planning and development. Second, under chairmanship of Theo Kotter, WG 8.4 there is admirable research support particularly from Frank Friesecke, a PhD student, this resulted in a very strong technical session in the working week (TS32). This group will provide an important output in 2006. Collaboration with external partners is being furthered by Prof Theo Kotter with the Spatial Information Societies, he intends to cooperate, where possible, with Gi4DM, In addition, Dr D Dumashie will collaborate and feed back to the WG, the RICS activities to progress an initiative on disaster management.

Turning now to the conference activities, the first plenary session underscored the conference theme- The past innovative culture of the pharaohs looking forward to the present day, and the future information age. Setting the scene for the four- day conference were dynamic presentations taking the audience through a whirlwind of science and sci- fi. Ismail Seregeldin highlighted scientific discoveries and Jack Dangermond emphasised that GIS is the emerging new language in this increasingly complicated, challenging and crowded world.

The week was exceptionally busy with many opportunities for Comm 8 members to expand their own knowledge of worldwide methods as well as compare issues to those experienced in their own countries. With so many presentations (see FIG web site, link to Surveyors reference library) the purpose here is to provide a brief overview of the papers, as well as the quality and breadth of the presentations.

A wide range of sessions were available, five were joint commission sessions, a further two were Comm 8 dedicated sessions. These were all very well attended and promoted lively debate.

TS19, Planning in informal settlements, a key session for WG 8.3, the overriding theme was public inclusion in housing, recognising that an understanding of the dynamics of urban change means concentration is required not to be deluded by a false impression that things will remain static. A joint Canadian and UK paper looked at the issues arising in sustainable managing mega city growth, The Kenyan presentation demonstrated both graphically the need to upgrade the informal settlements as well as the why and how to work towards collaborating with slum dwellers. The Zanzibar experience linked the dual conference theme of SID as well as surveying. The UK presentation focused on the particular issue faced by women headed households in informal settlements and the work being done by a UN appointed special rapporteur. The session was concluded by a USA presentation of the elasticity of informal land tenure in Poland thus truly demonstrating that this is not just an issue for the continents of Sub Saharan, Asian and Latin America.

TS24 Planning for Rural and Urban Communities, a dedicated Comm 8 session, commenced with two presentations on the implications for the planning system in European areas (Denmark and Norway), complimenting the excellent rural agenda highlighted by Australia. These were followed by two challenging research doctorate presentations from Germany. We welcome hearing from researchers since this importantly brings additional rigour and new ways of seeing things in the area of our professional activity.

TS29 Approaches in Land consolidation and community regeneration, a specialist topic, was well attended. Three presentations (Germany, Hungary, and Morocco) on urban and rural consolidation provided useful comparisons in methods, techniques and issues while two UK presentations focused on community issues arising first in mineral development in the developed and developing worlds, and the regeneration of historic Port towns. The final presenter, a judge involved in Norway's land consolidation Court of Appeal, provided a complimentary professional view of this subject.

TS 32 Disaster management and GIS applications the other Comm 8 dedicated session but including our conference partner, GSDI. This was particularly a professional set of speakers with excellent quality presentations. Comm. 8 delegates from Germany started the session followed by members from SDI in Serbia and Montenegro, Algeria and Egypt. This theme, Spatial Development Infrastructure was continued in TS37, but moved towards an emphasise to linkages with urban planning.

The final session, TS44 Financing affordable housing, the delegates heard an exceptionally good presentation from a private sector operator who explained innovative use of recycling materials to deliver lower housing costs, especially for temporary houses with obvious application to disaster areas, proved by current work in flood areas in Asia. The idea mooted by Comm 8 to link the topic of affordable housing with Comm 10 could be built upon further, and we are encouraged that Comm 10 chair elect is positively taking up this idea.

In summary, a very positive working week for our Commission welcoming new delegates, as well as receiving new ideas. Although many new ideas, four emerged as actions that we in our area of professional activity will need to increasingly consider. These include, first recognising that within informal settlements there are shifting norms of occupancy, next, that spatial data infrastructure is the immediate future of our professional working lives, third, the environmental balance will increasingly become a competitor to urbanisation and finally participatory approaches continue to evolve but will need to adjust to changing social patterns of engagement and inclusivity in order to motivate the world's increasing human population.

#### **Dr D Dumashie Chair Commission May 05.**

All papers from this conference as well as those presented since Dec 03 are available in the web based library administered by FIG central office. It is known as the FIG Surveyors Reference Library and provides access to the full spread of knowledge presented.