

This issue of The FIG Report is the farewell speech by outgoing FIG President Professor Holger Magel at the handover ceremony on December 2, 2006 in Münster, Germany, that ushered in the 2007-2010 FIG Council and installed Professor Stig Enemark as FIG President



Changing FIG— Model for a Changing World

Professor Holger Magel



*Es muss das Herz bei jedem Lebensrufe
Bereit zum Abschied sein and Neubeginne
Um sich in Tapherkeit und ohne Trauern
In anderee neue Bindungen zu geben ...
Und jedem Anfang wohnt ein Zauber inne
Der uns beschützt und der uns hilft zu leben.*

[Herman Hess, Stages; English translation on p. 42]

A milestone in the history of the FIG

The carousel turns full circle: A little over four years ago we met in Frankfurt am Main for the handover from the American to the German FIG Council, and today the German Council leaves the leadership of the FIG and hands it over to—to whom, indeed?—not to a national team, as was customary in the FIG for 128 years. For the first time, the leadership is an international team of individuals from six countries and four continents who were directly elected by the General Assembly. The “outgoing” Council hands over today to the “incoming” Council, but the occasion is more than special—it is a milestone in the long history of the FIG.

What could be more suitable than to celebrate this milestone in this Town Hall, with its world-famous Hall of Peace (*Friedenssaal*), where history was once written for millions of people, for several religions, and for a whole

continent? It is symbolic for the FIG and its new leadership to be inaugurated in the surroundings of the *Friedenssaal*. Our community of idealists and volunteers has dedicated itself to worldwide peace; we want to make our contribution to peace through our numerous and—as we believe—important contributions in the fields of land, water, and coastal management; settlement; the equal development of urban and rural areas; the guarantee of property and tenure; and building of functioning market economies, of environmental protection through data acquisition and data processing, as well as monitoring of measurements on land, from the air, and from space.

As surveyors, whether in the “front-line,” with our “boots on the ground” on clients’ sites, or in ministries, public authorities, or research laboratories and universities, we know that ultimately, and indeed throughout the world, it is a matter of not only doing our duty

but always of doing more. This is the spirit of our FIG which I experienced during my presidency. It is this spirit that makes the FIG so valuable to the world—to its over 100 member associations and to such organizations as U.N. and the World Bank. We have neither business nor power interests; we want only to help and to make our contribution in the hope of a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world which, as we realists know, changes itself daily in both positive and negative senses.

A big thank you to the UK and US FIG Councils

It is to the great credit of our predecessor “governments” in the FIG that they recognized, at the right time, that the FIG and its leadership structures must become more professional and more representative. Only in this way would the FIG be better able to meet the increased and ever increasing global

and national challenges to our profession.

The appointment of a full time FIG director which was already discussed under the Australian presidency and implemented under the UK and especially Peter [Dale], your presidency, deserves the highest recognition, as do the changes from a structure of national teams and associated FIG Congresses to separate elections of Council mem-



Professor Holger Magel, outgoing FIG president, giving his farewell speech

bers and the Congress venue, which were consequently adopted during the American leadership under your presidency, Bob [Foster].

These achievements were a splendid starting point for the German team which had the task of implementing the not always easy changes, and indeed reorganizing the organization and, more recently, the FIG Office.

It is therefore a happy coincidence that the presidents of the preceding British and American periods—Peter Dale and Robert Foster—are with us today to join with us in celebrating the “change of the FIG” and the new era upon which our organization is embarking upon. This new FIG—its leadership, office, and communication structures—

will naturally not be spared of further changes, should developments in the world at large and the professional community of surveyors this demand.

Thanks to you, dear Peter and dear Bob, my country was able to take over and carry on the leadership of a very healthy FIG four years ago. In German, we have a saying concerning successive heirs to a farm that my first Minister at the DVW always held before me as an ideal:

“What you have inherited from your fathers, you must earn again, for it to become yours!”

Shaping the Change— Implementing the 2002-2006 Work Plan

We, the German Council, came into a rich inheritance, indeed. Under the motto “Shaping the change,” we saw ourselves to administer this inheritance as trustees. We set out to guide FIG and apply its precepts in the light of the continually changing global and national conditions, and to shape and structure it in such a way so that it would be well equipped to meet future crises. And where possible, we sought to enhance the inheritance. It is for others, and particularly the General Assembly 2007 in Hong Kong, to make an assessment of our efforts and of the German period, but we are naturally proud to have enhanced FIG by having carried out our work plan efficiently, under the leadership of the General Assembly. We followed a number of ambitious goals set at the beginning of the German period in 2002. We wanted to:

1. Exercise intellectual leadership by clear and simple messages concerning the identity and role of surveyors (examples: “From surveying to serving society” or “well grounded specialised generalist”),
2. Continue and bring to a conclusion the structural reorganization of the composition of the Council, Office and Commissions and strengthen cooperation between the Commissions.
3. Generate more income for the FIG, *inter alia* through events involving or arranged by the FIG, and by attracting financially strong Corporate Members.
4. Increase substantially FIG membership so as to become a truly global organization.
5. Promote professional presentation (including publication) of the outcomes and results of the work of FIG Commissions (e.g., create a reference library) and of FIG events, thereby increasing their appeal to the world public.
6. Increase our commitment to assisting the weak in the world through stronger cooperation with the U.N. and the World Bank and by intensified cooperation with sister organizations (I draw attention to the foundation of the Joint Board of GIS, its African initiative, and the urgently necessary coordination in the area of Disaster and Risk Management).
7. Have a greater presence in the regions (see the Regional Conferences and the many visits of the President and Council Members), better communication between the FIG leadership and members (see the Newsletters, excellent web pages, Presidential Letters etc.), and greater communication between our profession and legislators.
8. Strengthen the interactions within the FIG between practitioners and academics and reinvigorate partnerships with purely academic sister organizations such as IAG.
9. Broaden the definition of training for surveyors and promote advanced training (i.e., capacity building).
10. Acquaint young people with the FIG at an early stage. Here I have good reason to thank the German, as well as the Swedish and Danish, presidents for their splendid support of student attendance at FIG events.

Although not set out *expressis verbis* in the Work Plan there was another theme which became the central concern of our presidency and of many of my speeches. I am thinking here of the all-important



Holger Magel congratulating new FIG president Stig Enemark

If the FIG did not already exist ...

Undoubtedly, the new Council will set other and newer focal points which reflect changing times. In the light of the time that I have already spent with the new leadership, I am confident that those factors which have brought success to the FIG will continue to be pursued and, indeed, strengthened, namely:

1. Close contact with members and Commissions;
2. High professional competence and awareness of the real on-site problems ("on site specialists");
3. Leadership and cooperation on the global stage, above all in all questions of land and tenure, motivated by the endeavour for a better world.

(Only) in this way can the FIG be truly a model for the world, because we practise it daily: we are present in all five continents, we combine almost all world religions, cultures, different forms of ownership and tenure, state organizations, and much more. At the same time, we are able to contribute successfully to the solution of global as well as local problems because we

engage in peaceful dialogue and work with each other as experts in our subjects. One can therefore without exaggeration say, "If the FIG did not already exist, it would be urgently necessary to establish it!"

Magic dwells in every beginning...

So the time has come to take our leave and say farewell from:

- The Presidency of the FIG;
- A successful and highly valued team and from such wonderful fellow warriors as Andreas Drees, Ralf Schroth, Thomas Gollwitzer, TN Wong, Stig Enemark, Ken Allred, and Matt Higgins (and previously also Gerhard Muggenhuber);
- The most loyal of co-workers, to name in the first instance Markku Villikka, and also Per Wilhelm Pedersen and Tine Svendstorp;
- The whole FIG community on behalf of which we have all in the past years invested so much time, mostly our free time, and so much effort—often at the cost of our professional work and

theme of the urban-rural inter-relationship. We wanted to encourage, on both sides of the relationship, the shift from a too urban perspective to a perspective which is also rural, or at least more balanced. This corresponds with my own, as well as with the European, and increasingly—as the example of China shows—non-European way of thinking and acting.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we wanted, to do so many things ... but I will stop recounting what we wanted to do, as I would undoubtedly come soon to one or more points where it would be clear that there were some things which we did not achieve, which may now fall to the new Council to pursue.



**FIG Working Week 13 - 17 May 2007
Hong Kong**

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FIG presidents (left to right): Holger Magel, Germany (2003-2006); Peter Dale, U.K. (1995-1998), Robert Foster, USA (1999-2002); and, standing, Stig Enemark, Denmark (2007-2010),

above all, at the cost of our wives (who deserve our very special thanks), our families, and friends.

We say "thank you" also to the DVW and its bodies which elected the "German Council" and entrusted it with the leadership of the FIG. It would appear that we have not disappointed the DVW.

Was it all worth it? I believe that the answer is yes. There are not so many opportunities in life to work beneficially in a global context and at the same time to get to know and to understand so

many cultures, religions, and countries; to be welcomed and accepted in such a friendly manner in so many parts of the world. My FIG years—and I speak here in the name of all the members of the Council—were strenuous but at the same time wonderful years. They were years of cultural and professional enrichment and of receiving so much from personal contacts.

My thanks, the thanks of all of us, go from this hall to all our member associations, to all their presidents and representatives, who together make the FIG such a harmonious orchestra, which now receives a new chief conductor and new solo violinists...

The German Council leaves the stage and the conductor's podium, adhering (or at least seeking to do so) to the wise words of Hermann Hesse, who in his famous poem "Stufen" (*Stufen*) has expressed what is valid for all time:

*"At life's call the heart must be prepared
To take its leave and commence afresh
Courageously and without a hint of grief
Submit itself to other newer ties."*

Hesse's much quoted maxim applies for both the *old* and the *new* Council:

*"Magic dwells in every beginning
And protecting us tells us how to live."*

May this magic of a farewell and of a new beginning which surrounds us today in this hall, guard my parting colleagues and friends and their families and benevolently guide the new Council, to whom I wish, from all my heart, success in their new responsibilities for the wellbeing of our FIG—"the godmother of all surveyors and surveying."