

**FIG President's Speech
at the Annual Dinner on Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Land Surveyors
Association of Jamaica
on Friday 31st October 2003**

It's a great honour and a privileged pleasure for me to deliver officially and personally the congratulation and warm greetings of your global "mother association" FIG.

Many thanks to you all and your predecessors for having been FIG-member since 35 years! I am glad that I decided to come to Jamaica. At the end of my visit I am more than ever convinced that it was a big chance for me too as the new President to learn more about your association, your wonderful country and more about your so friendly people.

I hope we have benefited both: you know now better how the FIG President and his Council is thinking, you know now better that we would like to encourage surveyors to become more politically and sustainably thinking and acting people with a high commitment to a more just, free and equitable world.

I will report back to my Council members that we have a strong and reliable partner in Jamaica, the LSAJ with powerful President, past presidents and members of the Board. I will report that they have celebrated a wonderful anniversary week with a unique mixture of praying and worship, courtesy calls with the Minister, Mayor, Ambassador, President and an outstanding Permanent Secretary, with academic lectures and discussions, exhibitions and a very impressive public relation work – and with wonderful social events.

For this success I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President Glendon Newsome and all of your co-workers. I additionally have learned that Jamaican surveyors are happy to get a strong support by their very cooperative wives. Therefore thanks to your ladies, thanks for your patience relating to the voluntary work of your husbands!

I am impressed of the existence of the association of land surveyors' wives. Should it even become a "member" of FIG or should we at least encourage other member associations to follow this wonderful example?

Let me continue with the report to my Council: I will recommend that LSAJ should play a crucial role as a focal point of surveyor's and FIG's activities in the Caribbean region. You should take over the leading role in discussing and demonstrating surveyor's most valuable and sustainable contributions to implement the UN Millennium Topics like poverty reduction, secure tenure, good governance, urban-rural-divide etc. More than ever you should start to convince all stakeholders, politicians, policy decisions makers, local authorities and citizens, that the key to a more sustainable world lies in better living and working conditions for all people both in urban and rural areas – as Prof. Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP many times has said – to gain this the key issue will be the reduction of poverty. It is at the same time the key factor to reduce the increasing crime rate. FIG can support you in following this strategy to play a more politically and socially committed role. This role must happen on the basis of high ethics and excellent qualifications (President of the University of Technology Davis has referring to his university said: "world class or no class") and of reliable knowledge experiences and skills competitive to global challenges. FIG can help provide you with global

good practice experiences, CPD-models and with the newest trends in all fields of our profession.

Finally, let me make a very private comment: I have enjoyed wonderful hospitality, impressive field trips and stays on and along the coast and through countryside. I know now why so many Europeans and Americans have had the “Jamaican dream”. Against this background many young Jamaican people still have an “American dream”. Let us hope and pray for it, but as well – in the sense of last year Johannesburg’s declaration – “let it happen”, that the future of Jamaica lies in a well-balanced economic, ecological and social development with sustainable, liveable cities and rural areas, with sustainable tourism industry which feels committed not to abuse or exploit the unique beauty of this country. “Let it happen” thanks to the efforts of politics, universities, professionals and professional organisations like LSAJ that the young people, the hope of each country, will remain in the country contributing strongly to further develop and protect as well this paradise.

It is my wish that LSAJ will be successful in supporting these wishes and following initiatives.

I come to the end: I would like to invite you more than ever to come to our big FIG events like Working Weeks: FIG comes to the members and the members to FIG. Please notice at least one date today: It’s the middle of October 2006. We and especially I would be very glad to welcome you to the FIG World Congress 2006 in my home town Munich, Bavaria, the most southern and most beautiful state of Germany! Some of you have already attended the FIG Congress 1971 in Wiesbaden, Germany, now all Jamaicans should come!